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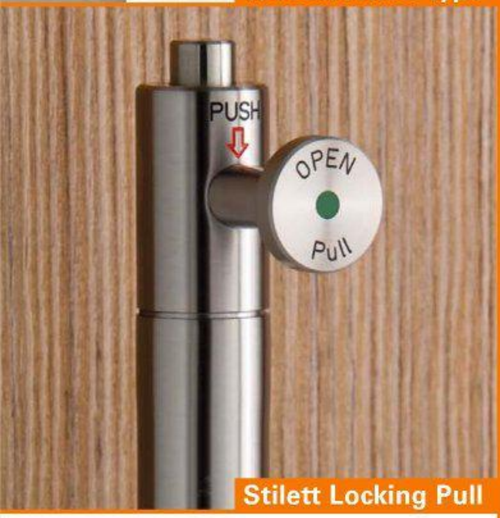

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"Design will often make the difference between a place that simply exists and a place that can thrive for many years to come—which is the most sustainable result of all."

Richard Rogers

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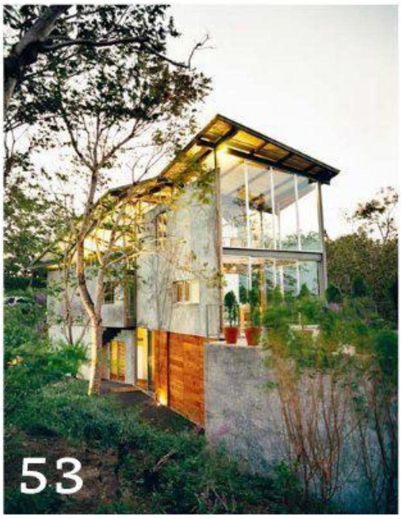

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The Re-Enlightenment

In all honesty, I'm pretty sure I'm not sustainable. I may stave off death—the ultimate green buzzkill—for a few more decades by eating organic yogurt and drinking fair-trade coffee, but that's assuming I don't have to face one of the myriad catastrophes that I am contributing to otherwise—like rising tides, rising temperatures, food shortages, global upheaval, and so on. You can't really blame me, and if you're not feeling sustainable either, I can't really blame you. Our ancestors made a lot of progress just trying to stay warm and sated, now who are we to have to go and change everything?

If one thing seems clear about our sustainability woes, however, it's that just about everything we do could use a lifecycle analysis and upgrade. Everything. In a recent piece in the *New York Times*, Harold McGee notes that if Americans would just use less water to boil pasta (all one billion pounds of it per year) we could save something like 500,000 barrels of oil annually. And that's just pasta water! What about rethinking beef, toilet paper, pesticides, lumber, and cars (or a thousand other things)? It's all a bit mind-boggling and leaves me feeling hopelessly unsustainable. Or just plain hopeless.

Just as the Enlightenment crept out of the Dark Ages, our young 21st century must jettison the practices of our carbon-chewing-and-spewing industrial age and welcome an environmentally enlightened era. In defiance to my own unsustainability, I'd like to suggest a two-pronged approach. First, individuals need to make micro-decisions—like using less water to boil pasta or riding a bike or bus to work instead of driving—which can affect macro-change. Second, governments, corporations, and other institutions need to lay a framework that makes adopting those decisions easy as well as taking care of the big-ticket items like power grids and high-speed railways. I may be stating the obvious, but given the gravity of the situation we're in (last summer, for the first time in recorded history, the North Pole could be circumnavigated), it bears repetition.

With this issue of Dwell, we decided to widen our scope beyond purely residences to incorporate the notion that change at home is not enough; a holistic view of the built environment is necessary for deeper eco-enlightenment. So we take you on a world tour of projects both big (like airport terminals) and small (like ceremonial tea houses) that reflect the sage practices of our most environmentally aware architects.

It's telling that all three of our profiled designers shrug off being labeled as "green" or "sustainable." "I do not want to talk about green, green, green, and so on," says Werner Sobek, who meanwhile develops buildings that consume zero energy and create zero emission and waste. "As an architect, I deal with the visual effects," says Terunobu Fujimori, "energy conservation is an engineer's work." But his structures, which poetically fuse 21st-century bones with timeless natural elements, remind us that the core mission of sustainability is to foster just this connection. And although his buildings may look high-tech, Richard Rogers offers a humanist view on creating places that stimulate interaction and thus "can thrive for many years to come—which is the most sustainable result of all."

The lesson here is that sustainability should always be a part of the process—it is a highly valuable, silent partner—but it is truly successful when it's not the only goal or end result. You can build the most "sustainable" eco-village in the world, but if no one wants to live there, what's the point?

Considering that most likely you're not in the market for a new airport terminal, we offer as a counterpoint to our profiles a step-by-step guide to the micro-changes you can make on your own turf. "At Home In The Zone" (p. 104) takes you on a room-by-room tour of green ideas—including the purchase of a PHID (that's short for portable humanoid insulation device; hint: it's usually made from terry cloth).

There's still quite a long way to go before I'll feel sustainable, and the quest for total sustainability will likely be as elusive as that for the fountain of youth, but my hopelessness is abating. The path to eco-enlightenment is being lit by thousands of people—from scientific researchers, to pasta chefs, to architects, to (gasp) politicians—and the more we understand and share, the more we can entertain the possibility of changing our approach to absolutely everything.

Sam Grawe, Editor-in-Chief
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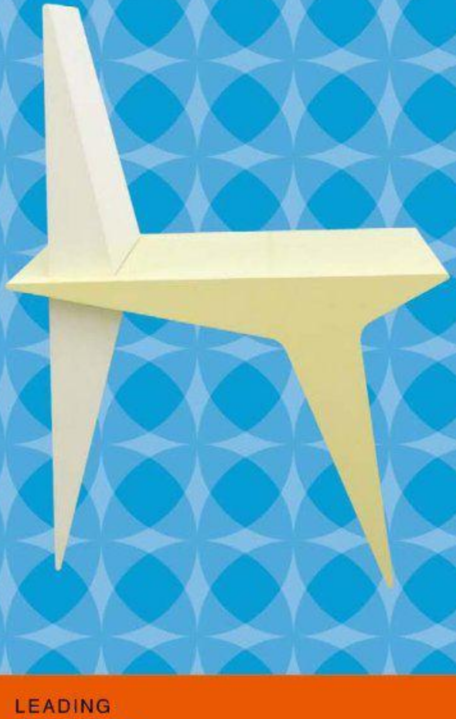

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The February 2009 Prefab issue was one of your most interesting issues in some time. I was encouraged to see that we're moving forward in this area, perhaps to a time when the concepts become a reality for the masses. Of course, as is so often the case, the one that I liked best was also the most expensive: William Massie's America House 08 ("Massie Produced").

You also managed to give me a few laughs, like the idea of a $25,000 shed ("Dwell Reports"). Take a few courses down at the local community college to learn how to build something that will stand up but not leak; call over your children and a few of your friends; and build it yourself. It won't come off quite like those in Dwell, but few things give a person greater satisfaction than walking into what was once just an idea in their head.

Paul Tominac
San Francisco, California

In the February 2009 Prefab issue, you incorrectly showed interior and exterior photos not of Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion House, described in the accompanying article ("More Fuller"), but those of a different design by Fuller known as the Dymaxion Deployment Units, which were generally used as shelters by the military. The interior image of the couple appears in Fuller's 1960 monograph with the caption: "Architect Walter Sanders, head of the Department of Architecture, University of Michigan, and his wife 'test-dwelt' the DDU in Washington and found it completely satisfactory."

Some of Fuller's designs may have been unrealistic, but you do both him and his legacy a great disservice when you spread misinformation and confuse the images of his designs, ideas, and visions.

Winston Chou
Berkeley, California

Editors' Note: We did indeed mistakenly show images of the Dymaxion Deployment Unit instead of the Dymaxion House. We regret the error.

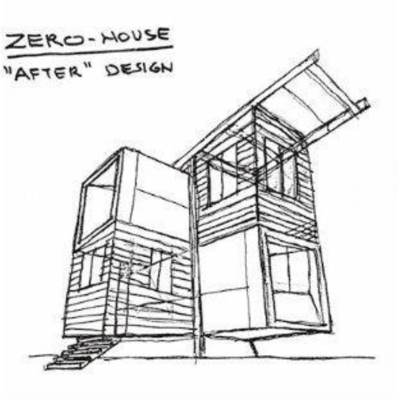
The Prefab issue (February 2009) was excellent. As both an architect and landscape architect in California for 58 years, I agreed with almost everything discussed. I remember the Konrad Wachsmann "GP" House ("Archive") from when I was an architecture student at the University of Southern California and devoted my whole career to low-cost housing.

Marmol Radziner has the best products I've seen; their factory is well thought out and efficient. The only drawback: The houses are too expensive. In California, stick-built, intelligent, well-designed, mid-century-modern houses can be built onsite for less than any prefab house on the market today. There is a place for factory-produced bathrooms, kitchens, and wall panels, but for the whole house? No.

On another note, as an experienced and knowledgeable residential architect, I advise all who now practice to design defensively—prevent the user from destroying your architecture. When you provide a space or shape that lends itself to a cheap, ugly addition, the user will grab the opportunity. The "Zero House" featured in the "Off the Grid" article is sure to be altered with additions shortly after its completion. The design is an invitation that's too tempting to leave alone.

I love Dwell. Your articles are most informative, timely, and well written.

William Krisel, AIA
Los Angeles, California



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The Chicken or the Egg

It's better to be in the henhouse than in the doghouse. There's a micro-movement afoot to bring the chicken coop back to urban backyards. Though fire escapes aren't generally hen-friendly, a patch of ground can accommodate a tiny flock even in the densest of cities, and the benefits are many: fresh eggs, rich compost, and even some help tilling your garden soil. Check out dwell.com to learn about the Urban Hens, a Boulder, Colorado-based project designing coops for city dwellers, and pick some freshly laid tips on building a modern hutch for your clucking clutch.
dwell.com/urbanhens

Cabinet Appointment

This month's 101 is required reading if you need to be schooled in kitchen design. Once you've mastered the dos and don'ts, head online for some visual learning. We've packed our virtual slide carousel with photos of successful renovations and brand-new innovations (like the Scavolini Reflex kitchen, below) for everyone's favorite room. It may not help you cook better, but it'll certainly make things look better. Dishwashing robot not included.
dwell.com/slideshow

excited to see the December/January 2009 "Detour" article. While the piece touched on Richard Neutra's Brown House, Gordon Bunshaft's Hirshhorn Museum, and I. M. Pei's Slayton House, you overlooked a major part of the DC story: the mid-century-modern enclave of Southwest Washington.

As the area goes through another period of urban renewal, Southwest remains the largest urban-renewal project in U.S. history. Efforts in the 1950s and '60s to create a "modernist utopia" led to structures by leading modern architects, such as Chloethiel Woodard Smith, Charles Goodman, Morris Lapidus, Marcel Breuer, Harry Weese, and the team of Arthur Keyes, Francis Donald Lethbridge, and David Condon.

In his excellent *AIA Guide to the Architecture of Washington, DC*, G. Martin Moeller Jr. (your featured expert) writes that while many urban-renewal projects have "come to symbolize indiscriminate destruction of neighborhoods (squalid though they may have been) in favor of drab, soulless superblocks…several of the housing developments in Southwest are among the best works of large-scale urban architecture of their era."

I'm sure Moeller mentioned in your discussions the significance of the modernism on display in Southwest. I just wished you had decided to write about it. Your readers missed out on a fascinating story.

Michael Shapiro
Bethesda, Maryland

A couple of small corrections about an otherwise excellent December/January 2009 issue: First, on page 136, the photo in the bottom left corner is not the Ronald Reagan Building, as captioned. Second, the architect of the National Building Museum is Montgomery Meigs.

Laura Gale
Sent via email

Editors' Note: We're fortunate to have such attentive readers and sincerely apologize for the errors we made in our "Detour" article about Washington, DC. The photo on page 136 pictures the Ariel Rios Building, with just a glimpse of the Ronald Reagan Building behind it, and the architect of the National Building Museum is indeed Montgomery Meigs, not Megis as we printed.

I've noticed in many of your articles that the wood of choice for siding and decks has been ipe wood. As an architect for many years, I was unfamiliar with this species and sought to learn more about it. Recent news releases state that the attempt to use ipe wood to repair a boardwalk in Wildwood, New Jersey, has come upon sharp criticism from environmentalists because the wood comes from the Brazilian rain forest. What is the story? Are we perpetuating a bad thing?

Winslow Wedin
Sent via email

Editors' Note: To answer your question, we turned to our architect friend Craig Steely. Here's what he said:

Wood is labeled "sustainable" based on responsible forestry, not species. You cannot call all ipe wood sustainable, but there is FSC-certified ipe wood available that can be considered green. However, another consideration for sustainability is life cycle. Ipe is dense, hard, and impervious to rot, so it is a great choice based on its long life span.

Ipe trees do grow on the fringes of the Amazon rain forests, and much of the wood comes from Brazil and Bolivia, places known for their less-than-stellar records regarding forestry practices, so you should select FSC-certified lumber when possible.

In regards to the boardwalk in New Jersey, beyond using a sustainable wood, does it make sense to cover three city blocks with any type of timber? I don't think so.

Correction: In our February 2009 issue ("Dwell Reports") we incorrectly attributed Herzog and de Meuron's Bird's Nest stadium for the 2008 Beijing Olympics as the work of OMA. We apologize for our shameful blunder.

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Peter Belanger

Having remodeled his own San Francisco home, which included adding two bathrooms, photographer Peter Belanger knows how to appreciate the details of faucet designs. "It was refreshing to be able to use the faucets as creative elements and create compositions with them rather than just admiring the knobs while brushing my teeth," he says about his "Dwell Reports" (p. 68) photo shoot.

Deborah Bishop

Contributing editor Deborah Bishop approached this month's 101 about kitchens (p. 118) with keen interest, as she is currently plotting her own kitchen renovation. "Having read and been told that this is the most important room in the house—and seeing such an array of aesthetic approaches—I am now effectively paralyzed," confesses Bishop, even though her culinary triumphs tend, at best, toward toast and French-press coffee. She also wrote this month's "Finishing Touch" (p. 144).

Adam Fisher

Adam Fisher lives and writes from a houseboat anchored in a cove in the San Francisco Bay. He's never wanted to live anywhere else—until he visited the Kavner residence ("Off the Grid," p. 62) located in the middle of a private nature preserve between Big Sur and Carmel-by-the-Sea, California. "It's half-way between Henry Miller's library and Clint Eastwood's restaurant," Fisher says. "There isn't a better location in the world than that."

Adam Friedberg

New York City-based photographer Adam Friedberg traveled to Japan in the depths of winter to shoot architect Terunobu Fujimori (p. 96), whom he describes as "the most low-key super-star you'll find." Friedberg braved snow, ice, fire, mountains, tiny door-ways, and even monkeys to capture the designer in his element but wasn't without assistance: "I just had to mention Fujimori's name and instantly I'd have a line of people wanting to help on the shoot for free just for a chance to meet him," Friedberg says.

Jaime Gross

San Francisco-based writer Jaime Gross met and interviewed Terunobu Fujimori (p. 96) on a recent trip to Tokyo and was delighted by the 62-year-old professor and architect's projects—and his energy level. "He might be one of the sprightliest people I've ever met," Gross says. "He scrambled up and down ladders to his tearooms, sped along train platforms, and ran all over the roof of his house to show me views of his neighborhood and the 'Viking horns'—a crooked tree branch—he placed at its peak. I could barely keep up!"

Sonja Hall

Sonja Hall is a freelance journalist and former Dwell editorial assistant. She jubilantly took her Spanish-to-English translation skills to new heights while interviewing San Salvador-based architect and resident José Roberto Paredes for this month's "My House" (p. 53). Having been steeped in modern architecture and design and now feeling the gravitational pull to Europe, Hall will be observing the world of transportation design through this year's professional cycling season in Italy.

Melissa Kaseman

As a believer in the sustainability movement and a lover of design, San Francisco-based photographer and visual artist Melissa Kaseman was thrilled to shoot the portrait of Branch founder Paul Donald for our new department "Design Finder" (p. 114). "It was fascinating to see all the merchandise in person and understand where it came from and who made it," she says. When not working on assignment, Kaseman uses her time and energy on personal artwork.

Dan Maginn

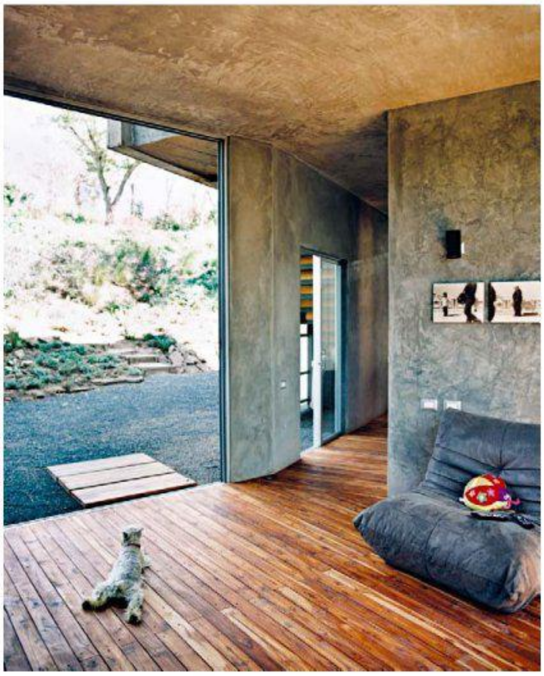
Dan Maginn is an AIA-member architect who lives and carpools to work with his wife, Keri, in Kansas City. For this issue, Maginn gave us a room-by-room rundown on how to best green a house ("Concepts," p. 104). Although he and his partners at El Dorado Inc. are extremely interested in promoting sustainable design on all scales, he does not consider himself to be an "eco-warrior." Instead he prefers the term "eco-tainment specialist."

Sally McGrane

Sally McGrane is a writer based in Berlin who traveled to Chicago to interview Werner Sobek (p. 88). The very charming architect was delayed by a problem in his 59th-floor apartment in the John Hancock Center; something was leaking in his kitchen. It turned out to be a down-to-earth "clean living" problem: The upstairs neighbor's dishwasher had broken.

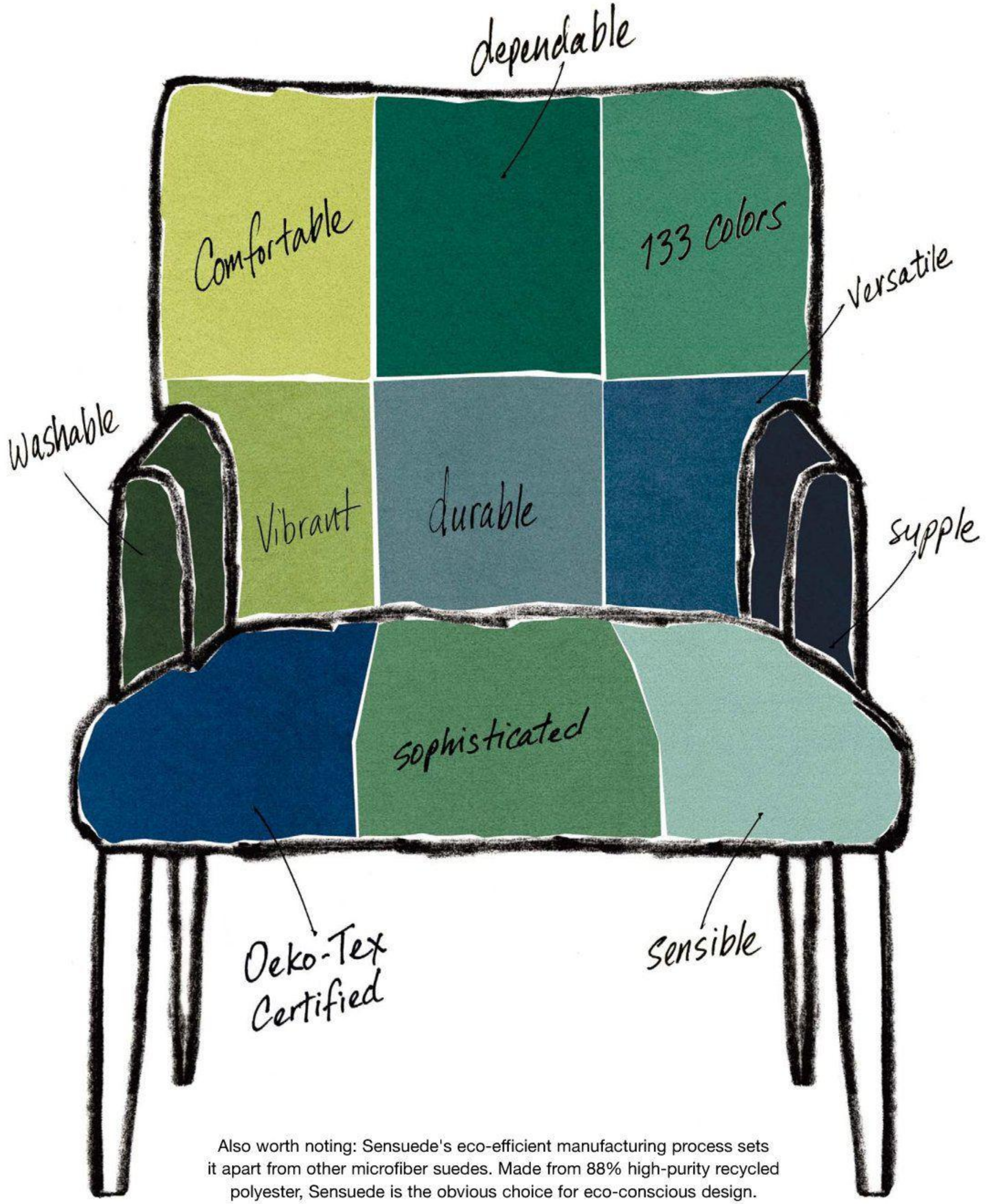
Paco Pérez

Born in Mexico City, Paco Pérez began his career as a photographer at age 16, shooting for the International Olympic Committee at the 1990 Central American and Caribbean Games held in his hometown. For this issue, Pérez captured the essence of José Roberto Paredes's home in El Salvador ("My House," p. 53). Pérez enjoyed turning his camera on the home as the model and main character for the images.



Architect and resident José Robert Paredes calls his concrete home in El Salvador ("My House," p. 53) a "tree house on the ground."

Photo by Paco Pérez



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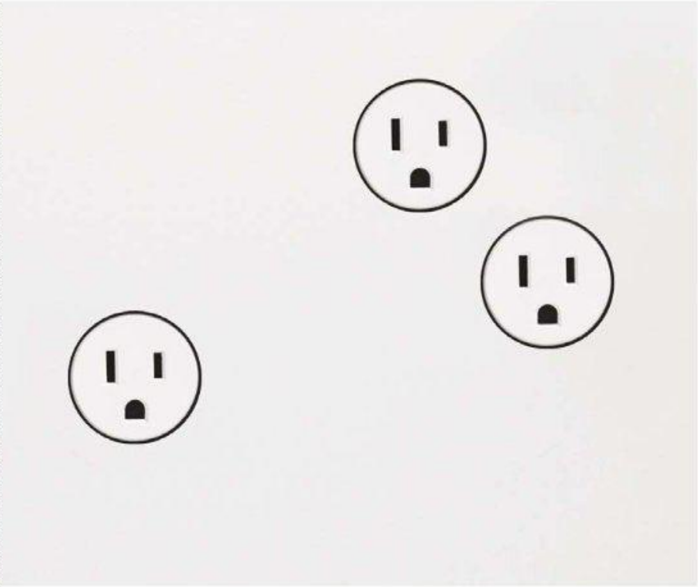
The Hyllie Water Tower in Malmö, Sweden, cuts an alien presence through the fog in this image by Danish photographer Kim Høltermand. Constructed in 1973 by civil engineering firm Kjessler & Mannerstråle, the tower was recently refurbished during the construction of a nearby sports complex. holtermand.dk

Photo by Kim Høltermand

May Calendar
Important dates in art and design, with architecture thrown in for good measure: Welcome to Dwell's timeline of the month.

May 1 (2009)
Into the Open: Positioning Practice, the U.S. pavilion from the Venice Biennale, closes at The New School for Design in New York.

Bright Times votive holder
By Tord Boontje for Artecnica
artecnicainc.com
Heavy metal gets the light touch with this delicate votive holder. It's a micro-fireplace that eschews fancy pyrotechnics for a simple, single flame. All Bright Times takes is a simple pull to transform the flat patterned sheet into a 3-D shrine to shine. After that it's a modern shadow show: Just light a candle, sit back, and watch its lo-fi effects transform your darkened walls.



22 series
By Omer Arbel for Bocci
bocci.ca
Cast aside the cover plate and contemplate the simplicity of a three-pronged plug laid bare. The 22 is a seamless suite of electric sockets designed to fit flush on any wall surface.

Rhino box
By Jonathan Adler
jonathanadler.com
How do you stop a rhino from charging? Take away his credit card (wah wah)...and cast him in ceramic. Your treasures will always be safe in his two armored compartments.

ABS alarm clock
By Michael Sodeau for Anything Design
anything-design.com
This clock doesn't play videos, won't show the latest NBA scores, isn't a portable music device, has no access to the Internet, and will never fit in your pocket. Nevertheless, its charmingly straightforward functions are nothing but essential: When you need to know the time, any time, ABS will tell you—and if you ask it nicely, its old-school alarm will gently wake you.

May 3 (1931)
Aldo Rossi, founder of Neo-Rationalism, is born a young sphere attached to a rectangle with four cylindrical appendages.

May 3 (2009)
Shape Our Country closes at the Netherlands Architecture Institute in Rotterdam.
nai.nl

George Smart

George Smart, executive director of Triangle Modernist Archive, is a modern-day Lorax for modern-designed houses. In early 2007, a quick Internet search for "Raleigh modernist architecture" took Smart to a web page describing the story of the mid-century Eduardo Catalano house, famous for its expansive butterfly roof, in Raleigh, North Carolina—and its subsequent destruction in 2001 by McMansion developers.

By the end of 2007, Smart—an executive educator by trade but a design enthusiast by blood (his father studied architecture at the North Carolina State University College of Design)—launched Triangle Modernist Houses, a website dedicated to preserving modern homes in the Research Triangle region by increasing public awareness of their threatened existence.

Today, the site lists over 550 modern homes in the area and hosts free for-sale listings. "We have such a concentration of modern houses in this area that are works of art and need to be saved," Smart says. "My goal is to get these houses into the hands of loving owners."

The home tours Smart has organized—which have drawn crowds of over 600 people—have helped make that happen: Shortly after a tour through a modern house for sale in Durham in May 2008, one couple in attendance became its new owners. "The more people who know about these houses, the less likely they are to get torn down," Smart says.

In January, Triangle Modernist Archive, the larger organization that oversees Triangle Modernist Houses, became a registered non-profit organization. It also created a board of directors—with Smart at the helm, speaking out for the houses he loves.

One of many modernist gems to be found in North Carolina's Research Triangle Park region near Raleigh.
trianglemodernisthouses.com

Nice Modernist

Arik Levy

Arik Levy's designs have been produced by a variety of big names—e15 (SH05 ARIE shelf, pictured), Zanotta, Council, Living Divani, and Bernhardt Design, to name a few—but the Paris-based, Israeli-born designer is still taken with the thrill of the potential that comes from new partnerships: "The first project together is like a first kiss. You never know how it tastes until you separate the lips."

What's your ideal working environment?
Working is like maternity. You know if you find a place where you want to give birth to your projects.

Is there someone outside your field who inspires you?
I don't have idols. My life is more like a journey; I meet different people on the way and they join me for a while, then I meet someone from the past or the future, and each of them influences me.

What novels, music, or films keep you thinking about design?
The movie *Dune* is fascinating, as a vision both of technology and of society.

What do you wish that you'd designed?
I wish to design everything I have not yet designed.

Is there a specific object that changed how you think about design?
If I had to put my finger on only one, it would be a screw.

What three buzzwords do you never want to hear applied to your own work?
I care about opinions, not words, and believe that in any opinion one can find an interesting issue.

Where do you see your profession in 20 years?
As long as I keep having a great time, any transformation is fine with me.

What might your last words be?
The world is about people. That should be our first preoccupation.

ariklevy.fr

Q & A

Photo courtesy Tonic Design (home), illustrations by Elisabeth Moch

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Tree Portraits
Emma Livingston
emmalivingston.com

Urban trees are ubiquitous, but consider what they're up against. In snowy climes they're exposed to toxic quantities of road salt; in dry climates they might simply wither and die; and everywhere, new buildings can block their already meager sunlight. In turn, trees are not always easy on the city. Their roots can destroy sidewalks, burst water mains, and undermine foundations. But each tree, choked by its concrete surroundings, brings a unique instance of nature to the city.

In January 2008, Emma Livingston began to take portraits of such trees in Buenos Aires, Argentina. As Livingston's use of the word "portrait" implies, each tree is both particular to its location and photographically recognizable in its own form and shape. "I am intrigued by how each one has a personality of its own," Livingston explains. This is an "expression conveyed through its size, build, 'posture,'" and "the 'attitude' expressed through the display of its branches."

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EXHIBITION

DESIGN CONFERENCE
Friday, June 26

Curated and conducted by the editors of Dwell, this comprehensive design conference focuses on good design in architecture, product design, landscapes and interiors.

EXHIBITION WEEKEND
Saturday, June 27+Sunday, June 28

The editors of Dwell continue to bring the pages of the magazine and website to life through a series of engaging panels and seminars at the Design Innovation and Sustainability Forums.

TRADE DAY
Friday, June 26

Calling all design professionals! From architects and interior designers to developers and retailers, this exhibition day is open to all in the design trade. Credentials are required. Register today!

GENERAL ADMISSION
Saturday, June 27+Sunday, June 28

Everything you ever wanted to know about modern design in one very big place: Dwell Outdoor, Furniture + Accessories, Kitchen + Bath, Energy + Solar, Design Materials, Modern Family, Modern Lifestyle, Design Technology, Kitchen Ecology.

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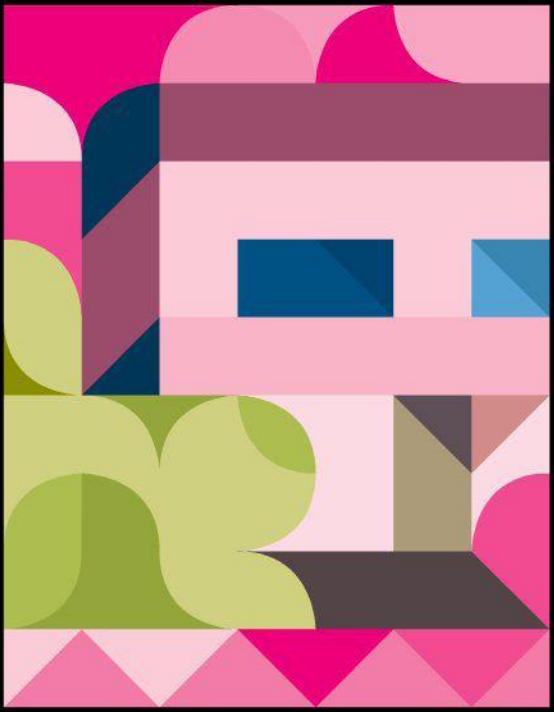
HOME TOURS



EASTSIDE
Saturday, June 27

WESTSIDE
Sunday, June 28

Take the show on the road and tour some of LA's most Dwell-like homes. Featuring single-family residences by established and emerging design talent leading the Southern California architectural scene, the Dwell Eastside and Westside Home Tours demonstrate the best in LA living.

From new construction to radical renovations you'll experience a diverse selection of inspirational dwellings and learn about the materials and methods behind the homes.

SPECIAL EVENTS

RESTAURANT DESIGN AWARDS
Friday, June 26

AIA Los Angeles Chapter and Dwell play host to the LA's hottest culinary event. The Restaurant Design Awards celebrate excellence in the design of restaurants, cafés, bars, lounges & nightclubs.

FILM SCREENING
Saturday, June 27

Visual Acoustics:
The Modernism of Julius Shulman

View the award-winning film about the extraordinary life and work of 98 year-old photographer, Julius Shulman before its theatrical release.

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FAST COMPANY

Clouds
By Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec
bouroullec.com
ligne-roset-usa.com
kvadrat.dk

Vegetal chair
By Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec
bouroullec.com
vitra.com

Being at one with nature doesn't necessarily mean having to leave the comfort of your living room. French designers Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec give shape to new terrestrial and airborne elements to transform your living room into the great beyond.

The individual textile components in Clouds (*above*) combine to form a conceptual cumulus on the wall, or you can spread them into a cirrus drifting across your ceiling. Then settle into Vegetal, a plastic chair whose seat is modeled after trees in 19th-century gardens that were pruned into functional furniture. It works both indoors and out, providing the ideal repose to sit and watch the clouds roll by.

May 9 (1937)
Show me the Moneo! Rafael Moneo, 1996's Pritzker Prize winner, is born in Spain.

May 11 (1976)
Alvar Aalto, Finland's champion of the International Style, dies in Helsinki. Fill your Savoy vase with black tulips.

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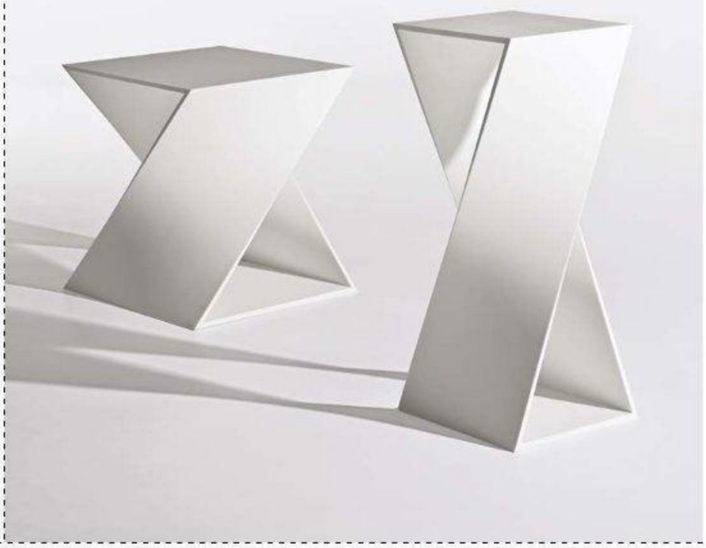
Ypsilon table
By Love Neuschutz for Karl Andersson & Söner
karl-andersson.se
Like a baby Bambi on its first wobbly steps, Ypsilon might look a tad unsteady, but the angular legs on this dear table provide a sturdy spot to dine with friends.

Torno side table
By Stephan Veit for Draenert
draenert.de
It's doubtful that Chubby Checker has ever checked out Torno, but if he did, we know what he would say: "Come on, baby. Let's do the twist."



Lazy Bastard chair
By Bertjan Pot for Montis
montis.nl
When is a name not merely a name but instead a point of pride, a way of life, a categorical imperative, and an honorable title to uphold? When that name is Lazy Bastard, and the chair in question is basically a bean-bag on legs. Indolence is bliss as you live out your idle dreams, lounging comfortably in a seat that defies you not to take it easy.

May 14 (2009)
Design for a Living World opens at the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, in New York. cooperhewitt.org

May 18 (1883)
Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius, later known as the Silver Prince, is born with a silver spoon.

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Fossil Cities

We often talk about letting nature back into the modern metropolis, but what happens if we look at this process over a far larger timescale—say, over the course of 100 million years?

Geologist and popular-science writer Jan Zalasiewicz explores the extremely distant terrestrial future in his poetic and thoroughly stimulating new book *The Earth After Us*. Zalasiewicz is refreshingly blunt in his assessment of humankind's chances of long-term preservation. "The surface of the future Earth," he writes, "one hundred million years from now, will not have preserved evidence of contemporary human activity." Fair enough. He adds, however, that in that distant era—as far from the present as we are now from the dinosaurs—there will still be subtle proof that humans once walked the earth.

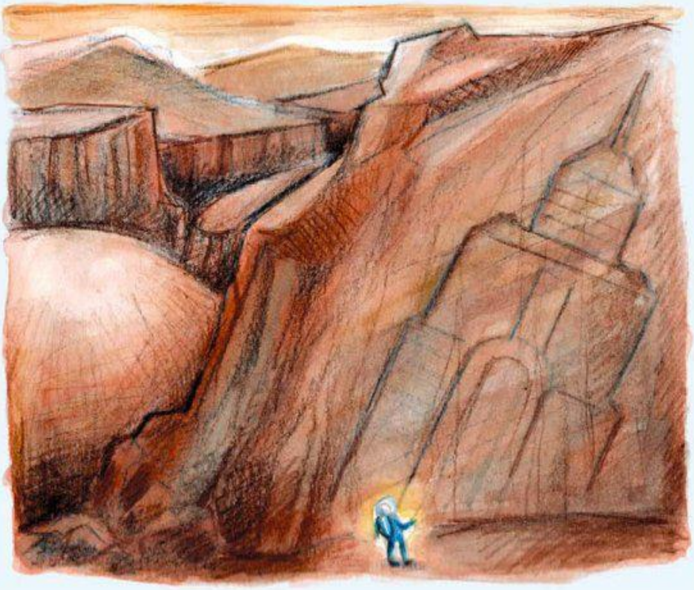
After all, some of our cities will actually *fossilize*.

Zalasiewicz explained the basics to Dwell: "I think we have a good idea, at least for the short to medium term, which cities have a chance of being fossilized," he begins. "That's because we have a reasonable idea of which bits of the Earth's crust are sinking and which bits are going up—and those cities being carried upward by plate tectonics will be eroded. No part of them will survive." San Francisco and Los Angeles, that is, will be erased entirely.

And those cities getting pushed down? "Once a city is buried and beneath the reach of waves, the process of fossilization will begin," Zalasiewicz says. He suggests that cities close to coasts and slow rivers will, sooner or later, be buried—and it is burial that allows for fossilization. Cities like New Orleans, Hanoi, Shanghai, Venice, and Amsterdam might thus survive "at least for a few million years into the future." As he writes in *The Earth After Us*, "Our drowned cities and farms, highways and towns, would begin to be covered with sand, silt, and mud, and take the first steps toward becoming geology."

Next time you're out walking across our many roads and parking lots, through shopping malls and homes, it might be worth taking a second look: All of this might yet be squeezed thin into some strange new sandstone and transformed into a permanent part of the future Earth.

oup.com



Harboe's Marks

Chicago preservation architect Thomas "Gunny" Harboe prefers not to dismantle architectural monuments. But at Mies van der Rohe's 860–880 Lake Shore Drive apartments, built in Chicago in 1951, one of the first steps in the preservation process was to remove the broad travertine pavement between the two towers.

Taking up nearly 1,100 slabs—each weighing as much as 175 pounds, many crumbling and leaking water into the garage below—was the easy part. The challenge was to create a replacement faithful to the original in all respects but one: It would be designed to last.

Harboe's solution, designed with colleague Rico Cedro of Krueck & Sexton Architects, used techniques that eluded Mies six decades ago: waterproofing the plaza's concrete base, creating a slight pitch, and cutting the stone (from Tivoli, like the originals) slightly thicker and some with shallow ridges or valleys to carry away rainwater.

The interventions barely alter the original design but prove what Harboe's experience in restoring mid-century-modern buildings had already taught him: In the less-is-more aesthetic, "sometimes less wasn't enough," he says.

Harboe's passion for conservation goes back to a taste for antiques acquired from his family. He studied history and material culture at Brown University, followed by conservation at Columbia University. While working on the reconstruction of the Frank Lloyd Wright Room at the Metropolitan Museum of Art as an intern, he noticed that "architects were the ones calling the shots"—so he pursued an architecture degree at MIT. "I saw the past through objects," he says. "And buildings were the largest objects I could find."

His professional career began more than two decades ago with an unexpected opportunity: He was hired by the Chicago design firm chosen to restore the Rookery, one of Chicago's noblest early skyscrapers. Harboe led the effort, won a National Trust for Historic Preservation award for it, and then directed the restoration of the equally lush Reliance Building nearby, which garnered additional accolades.

In the mid-1990s, Harboe helped establish the U.S. chapter of Docomomo, an international organization dedicated to preserving modern architecture, and in 2006, he founded Harboe Architects, specializing in high-end restorations such as Mies's Crown Hall at the Illinois Institute of Technology in 2005 and currently Frank Lloyd Wright's Beth Sholom Synagogue in suburban Philadelphia.

Harboe's goal is to make his own work invisible—though sometimes there are exceptions. In the travertine pavement at the Lake Shore Drive apartments, a small section of original slabs will be darker than the rest—deliberate evidence that the present restoration is an essential piece of the building's history.

—Jay Pridmore

Mies van der Rohe's Lake Shore Drive apartments face off across a renovated middle ground in windy Chicago.

harboearch.com

docomomo-us.org

Photo by Ezra Stoller/Esto, illustration by Joe Alterio

Future Nature

Preservation

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The Future Laboratory,
Ed. Robert Klanten et al.
Gestalten, $65

From restaurants and packaging to the molecular makeup of our daily meals, all experiences associated with eating are subject to design. *CrEATe*, an ongoing project by The Future Laboratory, sets out to explore food "from a broader design perspective"—after all, their book reminds us, "the context in which food plays a vital role" seems to have "infinite applications." *CrEATe* steps up to the plate and delivers.

Revisiting the Glass House
Edited by Jessica Hough and Mónica Ramírez-Montagut
The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum et al., $39.95

For a traveling exhibition that kicked off last year at Connecticut's Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, curators Jessica Hough and Mónica Ramírez-Montagut sought out artistic responses to modern architecture. Utopian, dystopian, abstract, surreal: The paintings, sculptures, collages, and videos on display in the show's catalog prove that the buildings of the classic modern period, epitomized by Philip Johnson's Glass House, were inspiring in more contexts than just architecture schools.

J. Mayer H.
Edited by Henry Urbach and Cristina Steingräber
Hatje Cantz, $75

The current popularity of German architect Jürgen Mayer has as much to do with the Internet as with the innovative aesthetics that his office has pursued. Mayer's quirkily geometric forms and unnatural color schemes that bring the flair of graphic design to architectural space have found their way around the world of architecture blogs with ease—and they look just as good in this new book from Hatje Cantz. Houses, law courts, and even a tattoo design take their places amongst interviews and project renderings.

The Infrastructural City: Networked Ecologies in Los Angeles
Edited by Kazys Varnelis
Actar, $39.95

Los Angeles might not seem to be an ideal city from which to learn important lessons of urban design, but Kazys Varnelis and his team of writers have managed an inspired—if slightly overcynical—analysis of the City of Angels. This is L.A. defined by its infrastructure: massive water projects, freeways, and power lines all wrapped up in a beautiful package and served between hard covers. The aerial photo essays by Lane Barden are worth the cover price alone.

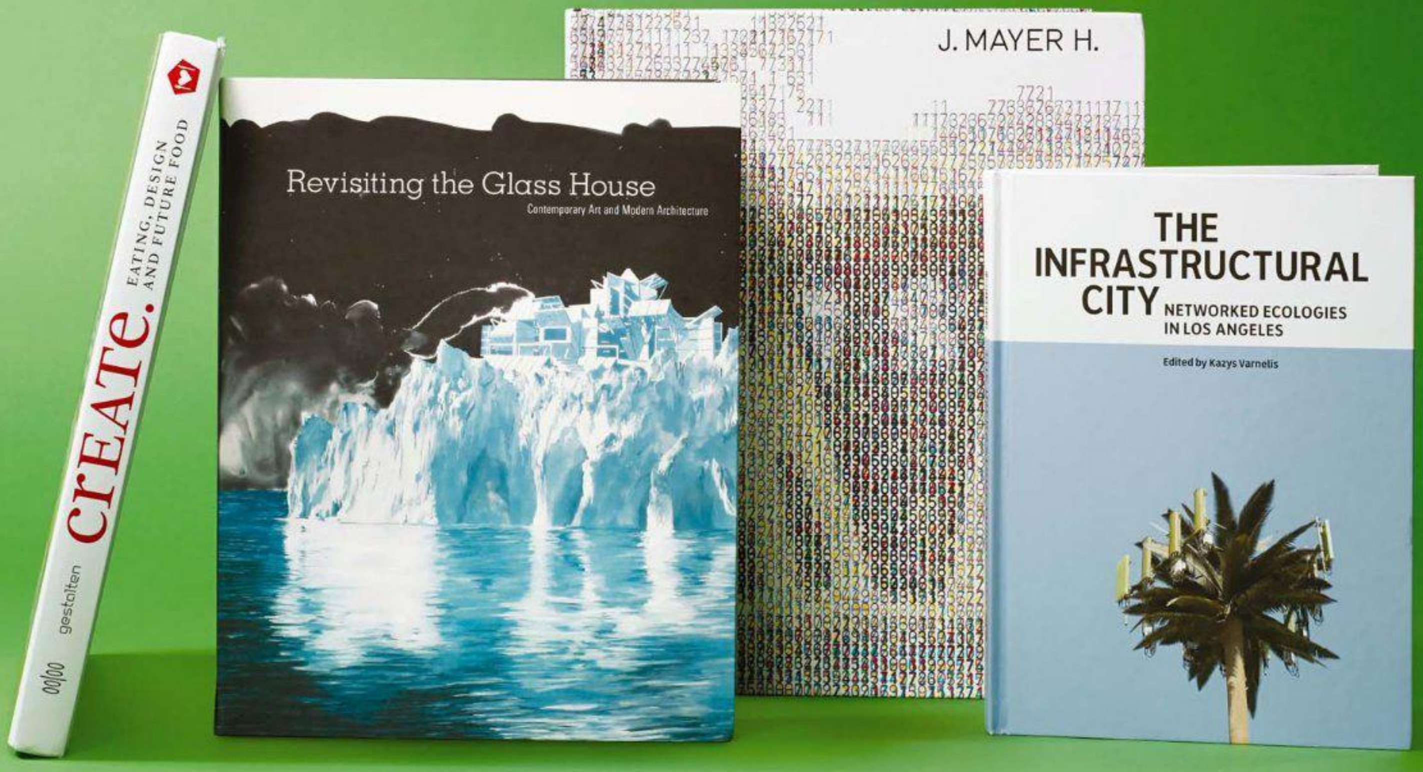

Photo by Peter Belanger

May 21 (1902)
Marcel Breuer, tamer of tubular steel and conjurer of concrete, is born in Hungary.

May 21 (2009)
MIX: Nine San Diego Architects and Designers opens at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego. mcasd.org

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Tower House
Andersson•Wise Architects
Leander, Texas
anderssonwise.com

The 1,200-square-foot Tower House by Andersson•Wise Architects stands on the shores of Lake Travis in Leander, Texas. As the designers explain, the original house was "a simple masonry structure built in the 1940s and consisting of a living room, a small kitchen, one bedroom, one bath, and a long porch facing the lake." Across a courtyard, the expansion went vertical, capturing panoramic views of the surrounding landscape from an open roof deck. With an exterior constructed from massaranduba, a silvery Brazilian hardwood, and an interior surfaced with a plywood made from Baltic birch, Andersson•Wise's addition cuts a distinguished profile ever so slightly above the treeline.

Photos by Art Gray

Houses We Love

01

02

03

04

05

06

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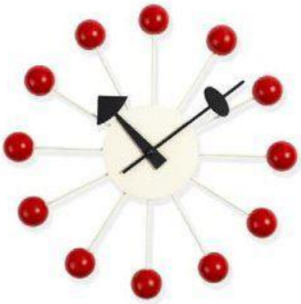

08

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customer file

Michelle Reter / Ann Arbor MI.

01 My headless Hummels—sorry grandma
02 Reminders of the endless summers of my youth
03 The shoes that got me through my first marathon
04 My Foscarini Twiggy Table Lamp from YLighting
05 The flat number from my year in Paris
06 The soundtrack of my high school years
07 Nelson Ball Clock that tells me its quitting time
08 Emery the wonder dog
09 Wooden box where I put my wedding ring every night
10 The perfume bottle that sits on my vanity

09

10

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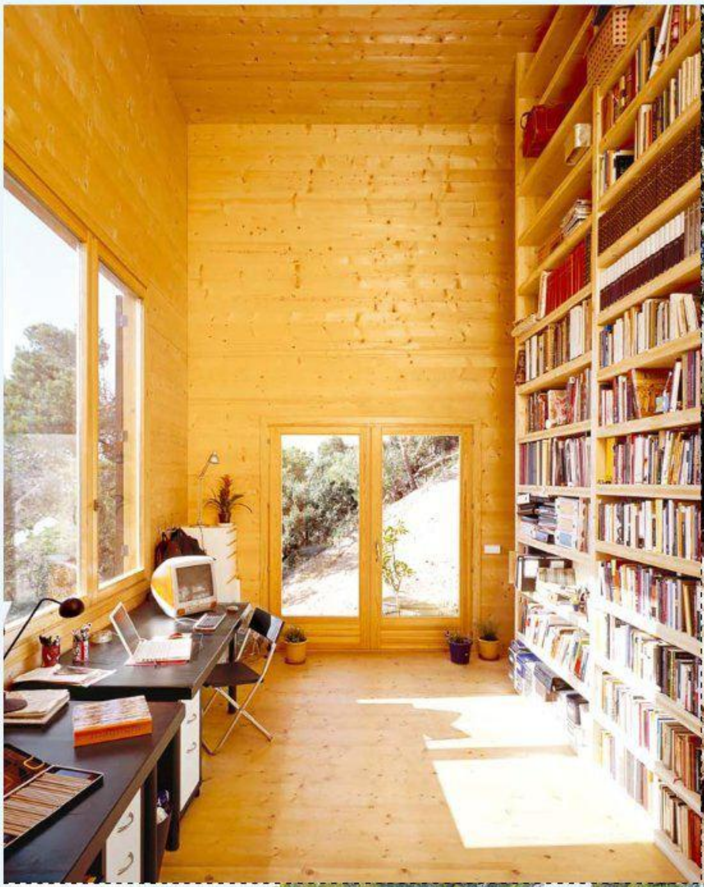


House 205
H Architects
Vacarisses, Spain
harquitectes.com

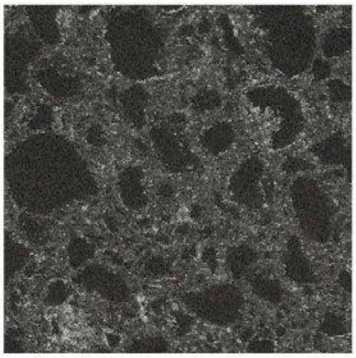
The enviably spectacular House 205 by H Architects is located on a sloping hillside plot in Vacarisses, Spain, just west of Barcelona. Made from large and easily disassembled panels of laminated wood, the house was built for a family of four. Resident Maria works for the City Council of Sant Cugat; her husband, Quico, is a photographer and collector of rare books who found himself in need of some major shelf space. Quico also used to play basketball with one of the design partners at H Architects—a sporting friendship that eventually led to this slam dunk of a home design.

Photos by STARP Estudi

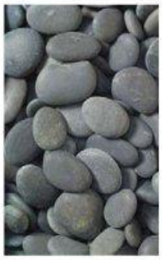
Houses We Love

Color Expression09

Basalt Black 6185T



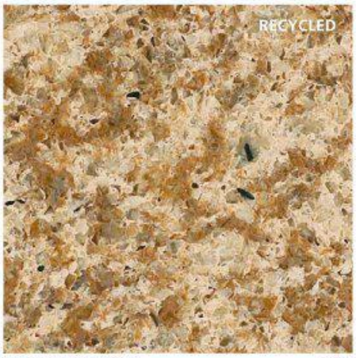
Black Rocks 4170



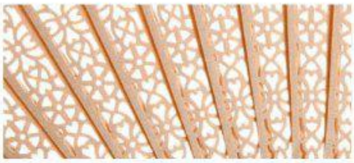
Smoky Ash 6140

Dusty Stones 4040

Metallic Black 7185



Chocolate Truffle 6350



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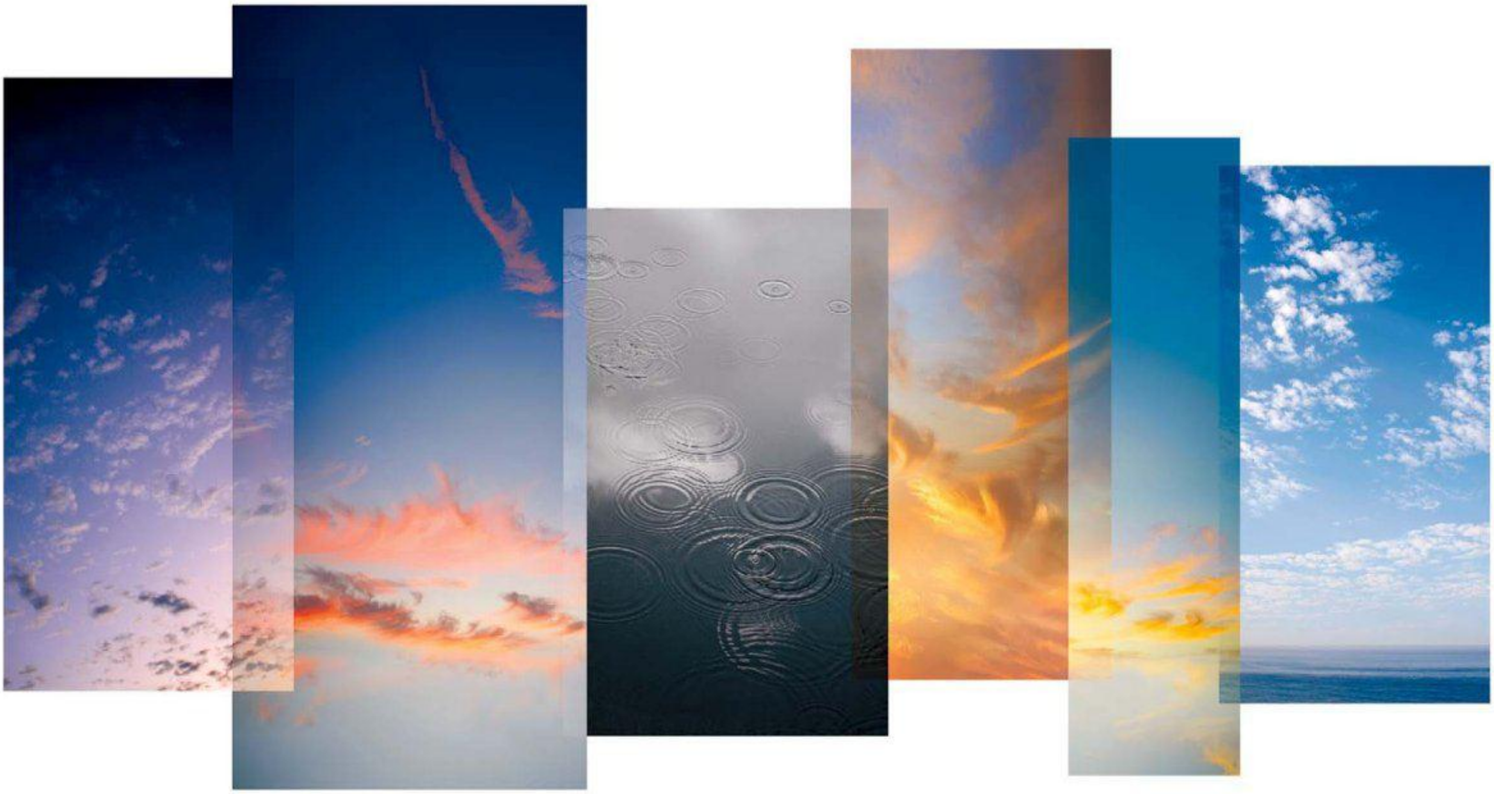

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Welcome to the Jungle

In Central America, Spanish colonial architecture prevails. But the creeping tide of modernism—represented here by the home of architect José Roberto Paredes—is signaling that change is afoot. Paredes gives us a tour of his house, set in the rain forest outside San Salvador, El Salvador.

As told to Sonja Hall
Photos by Paco Pérez
Illustration by Christine Berrie

Dotted by potted plants and lined with a simple iron gate, Casa Tuscania's back patio aims to exist harmoniously with the wild environment just beyond.

For many of us, the childhood tree house was our first, albeit winsome, residential aspiration. For José Roberto Paredes and his wife, Patty, dreams of raising their family amongst the treetops never faded. Upon returning to El Salvador after studying in Spain, José Roberto left his father's architecture practice to start his own firm, Cincopatasalgato. Before long, he had harnessed the imaginations of his entire family to design an arboreal abode just outside the capital, San Salvador.

I never imagined that I would live in a house like Casa Tuscania. In fact, it wasn't until I saw it for the first time, in the light of the morning, that I realized it was my dream house. Just a couple of years before, I had left my father and brother's firm to start my own more modern architecture practice in San Salvador. We have broken down walls, literally and figuratively, to create the *Swiss Family Robinson*-like tree house we call home. It's pretty isolated here, outside of San Salvador, and those factors were important in deciding where to build and how to raise our two daughters, Pilar, 15, and Jimena, 4, in a natural environment.

While studying architecture in Barcelona, I learned a lot about spatial efficiency because I lived in a tiny little flat—well, it was more of a bachelor pad, but that's open to interpretation. We didn't want to build a huge house. We wanted it to be cozy but open, making sure every room used its space wisely. Few walls separate the rooms and our dining table doubles as a homework desk and venue for Scrabble games. We did something strange and installed a bathtub right in Jimena's bedroom. She loves splashing around in there and would spend hours on end in it if she could.

Throughout the house I used concrete for its cooling quality and easy maintenance. It works well in San Salvador's sun-drenched climate. Patty grew up in Sudan, and I grew up here; we know an awful lot about finding ways to cool off inside when it is sweltering outdoors. But we didn't want to sacrifice the sensation of being ▸

Banks of windows and translucent panels (top left) help keep Casa Tuscania nice and airy. Exposed beams and a cantilevered loft soar over the high-traffic eating area (top right), giving the family a sense of spaciousness. José Roberto looks down on the secluded courtyard (bottom), where Pilar and Patty open things up.

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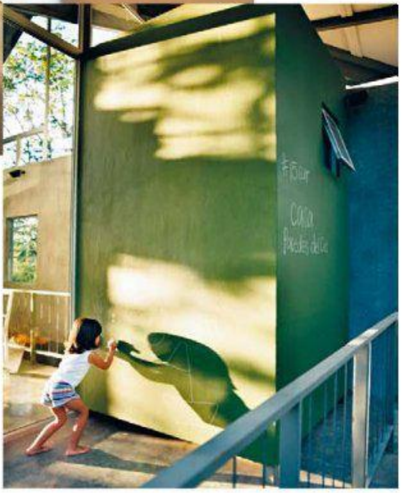

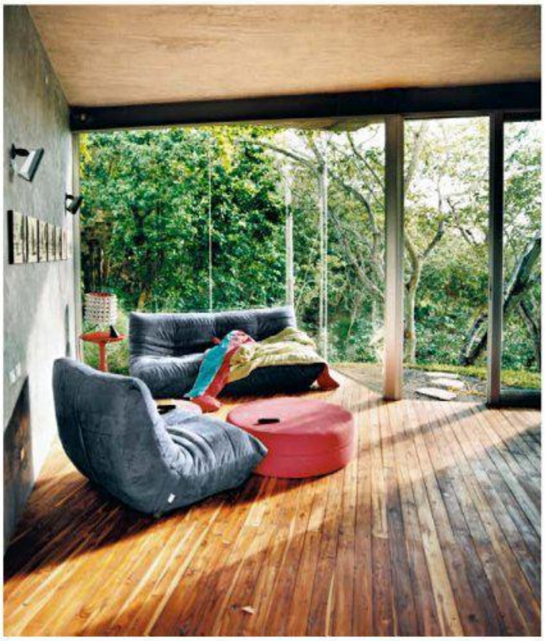

in a warm home for having all concrete walls, which is why we lined one of the walls with polycarbonate sheets. I've always found materials much more interesting than colors, and therefore I wanted to use wood, concrete, glass, and the polycarbonate, which offers us a bit of privacy and filters the light.

If we're at home on the weekends, we paint, read, or play games at the big dining table. It's strange hearing myself call it a dining table, though. The times that we formally dine at it are so few! The living area receives the best sunlight in the morning. It is definitely Jimena's favorite place to catnap on weekend afternoons with the gentle breeze flowing through the back patio area and up through the front entryway. It almost feels like a porch inside. On a typical weekend morning, I am usually the first to rise. I start the day by opening the big patio doors downstairs. One thing we never do is take fresh air for granted, especially since there is a huge air pollution problem in the city.

With all the open doors we often get asked if we have trouble with bugs. I usually say that although we get the occasional visitor, only every now and again do dangerous forest friends, like venomous snakes, actually find their way in. It's a minor drawback to living in a tree house on the ground, but I don't think they like it as much as we do in here—there aren't too many walls or hiding spaces.

The bathroom is one of Patty's favorite places in the whole house. It is like a little cabin retreat. To be completely honest, I don't know what women find to do in bathrooms, butI can understand why she likes it in there! The warm wood walls and the random patterns of light create a soothing effect.

The lofted mezzanine area inside was designed to be a lounging space. We strategically placed furniture atop a comfortable rug and expected the girls to do their homework up there. But the truth is we barely use it. I'd like to change that someday. If we made it more of an artist's studio, Patty could paint there and I could work from home on lazy Friday afternoons. We all seem to prefer revolving our lives around the kitchen anyway. It feels like we are constantly cooking something—breakfast, lunch, dinner, and the snacks between.

We love the outdoors, but we don't have patio furniture, which forces us to redefine the terrace on a daily basis. Sometimes we host other families for a barbecue in the late afternoons over the weekends, open a bottle of wine, and let the kids watch a movie inside. But other times it's like an underappreciated empty platform that we use to look out into the trees from the kitchen when the warm sun bleeds into a dark, bedazzled sky. ▸

The bottom level houses the bedrooms (top) where Pilar, José Roberto, Patty, and Jimena loll. Jimena (right) makes use of a giant chalkboard just outside. The family room (bottom) contains furniture reminiscent of Ligne Roset's Togo collection and a CH 07 egg-carton lamp by Salvadoran designer Eugenio Menjívar.

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José Roberto, who says his family is always cooking something, prepares a snack with Jimena on the Ariston gas cooktop installed on the custom table. ℹ

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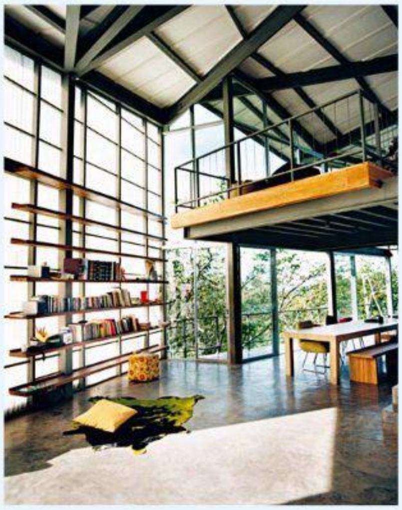
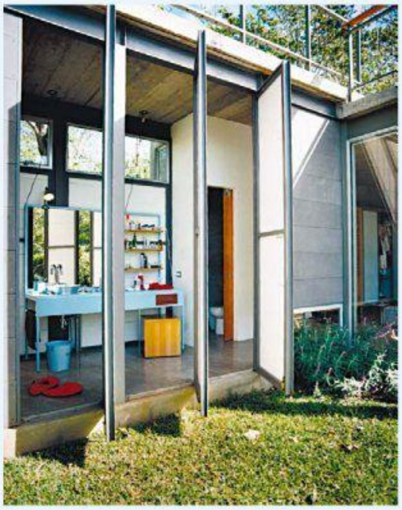
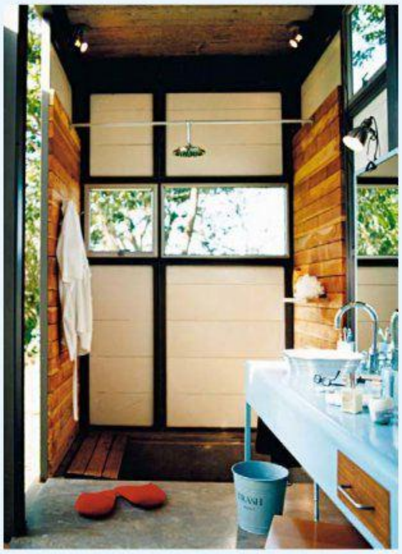
Bed, Bath, and Beyond
Modernists have long embraced flexible spaces, but José Roberto upped the ante by placing a bathtub inside his daughter Jimena's bedroom. The poured concrete tub—with fixtures by Ferco, a bathroom and flooring company in Guatemala—takes the multifunctionality of the abode to entirely new levels by combining hour-long bubble baths with playtime anytime she needs to cool off, rubber-ducky style.
ferco.com.gt



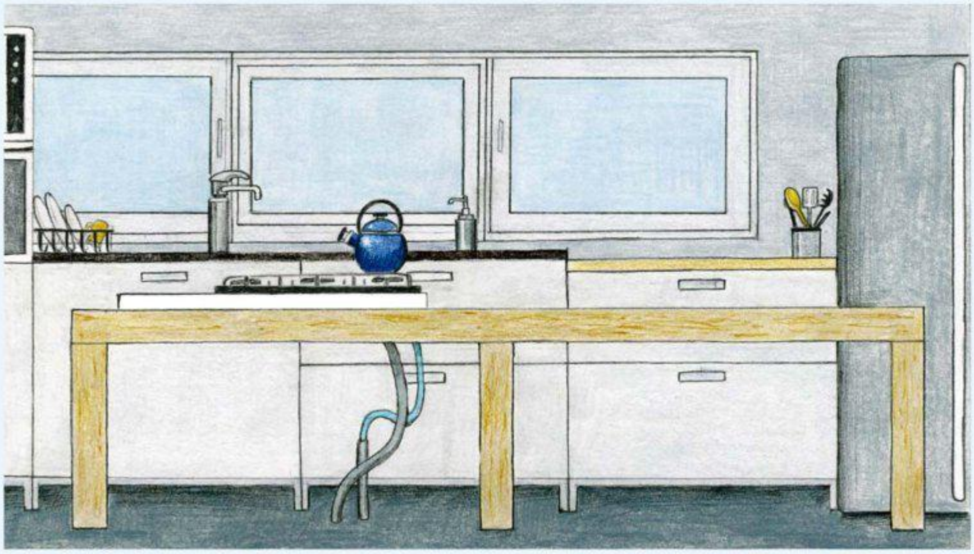
Glow Zone
To maintain privacy without blocking out the tropical morning sun, semiopaque polycarbonate sheets were chosen to flank the family space. An affordable solution, the sheets minimize the sunlight that causes interior temperatures to rise quickly in the afternoons. Additionally, they provide a warm glow in the room to whomever can claim the couch first for an afternoon nap.



MAACO Counter
The bathroom counter is done up in a heavenly blue automotive paint, giving the space a relaxing gloss, which Patty adores as she prepares for, or washes away, each day. An inconspicuous shelving system next to the mirror shields unsightly bathroom items like extra rolls of toilet paper without detracting from the haven's simplicity.



Baño Rustico
The walls lining the shower draw in the sunlight thanks to a natural oil finish on the teak and neutral shades of Sherwin-Williams paint. According to José Roberto, the screws used to install the wood were purposely left exposed to differentiate this "miniature canvas" from their sleek modern home and give it an old-fashioned feel.
sherwin-williams.com



Able Table
José Roberto designed the extralong teppanyaki-inspired dining table, which also doubles as the kitchen island. Made out of yellow ipe wood (a tree native to much of Central and South America and best known as a durable decking material), the custom-built table includes a gas cooktop by Ariston.
ariston.com

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PISE Does It

From an ecological perspective, pneumatically impacted stabilized earth (PISE) is a nearly perfect building material. A new house, halfway between Carmel and Big Sur, near California's central coast, showcases PISE's residential potential.

Between two of the most beautiful towns on the California coast, Carmel-by-the-Sea and Big Sur, there's a hidden valley: 31 square miles shared by just 300 families, each of whom owns a small parcel and the right to build. The area, originally known as Rancho San Carlos, was one of the last intact Mexican land-grant ranchos in California. Now it's the Santa Lucia Preserve, a private eco-park, off-limits and unknown even to area natives.

San Francisco architect Eric Haesloop discovered the preserve through his clients Bob and Allyson Kavner, who own five acres there. "It's so spectacular," he says, "just what you imagine California was like a hundred years ago, with wild boars, turkeys, and birds galore."

The Kavners' lot is situated where the oak woodlands of the coastal mountain range meet the meadows of the valley. An early farmhouse for the ranchero once stood here, surrounded by a few scattered fruit trees. Surveying the site, Haesloop realized that there was a lot of history, both natural and human, that the architecture would need to respond to—not to mention the needs and desires of the Kavners themselves. Both husband and wife are originally from the East Coast and have many happy memories of summer vacations spent in upstate New York. They fantasized about an Adirondack-style camp, complete with cabins, to better host their four grown children and five grandchildren. The house was to be a weekend retreat, a place to escape the pressures of work. Bob Kavner was an early president of Idealab, the high-tech incubator, and now serves on the boards of several successful Idealab start-up companies. Weekends, however, are devoted to his hobby, woodworking. "How do you bring in those memories and that love of traditional wood construction," asks Haesloop, "with the Northern California climate, topography, and building traditions?"

The answer turned out to hinge on a building technique called PISE (pronounced "pee-zay"), an acronym for "pneumatically impacted stabilized earth." The technique is a modern method of handling one of the oldest known building materials: dirt. It's akin to adobe or rammed-earth construction and results in walls that are up to two feet thick, never need to be painted, and instantly look like they've been around forever.

The Adirondack style that the Kavners remember so fondly is a rustic American take on the Tudor mansion or Alpine chalet, with giant log columns used in ▸

Photo by Matthew Millman

Story by Adam Fisher

The Kavner house is a California take on the classic Adirondack style of upstate New York. The main house is used every weekend and the cabins fill up at family gatherings.

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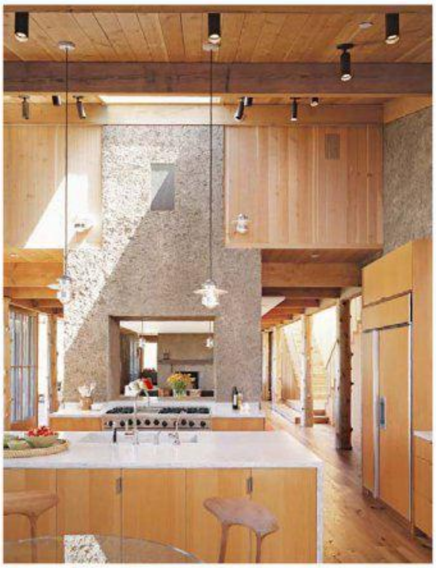
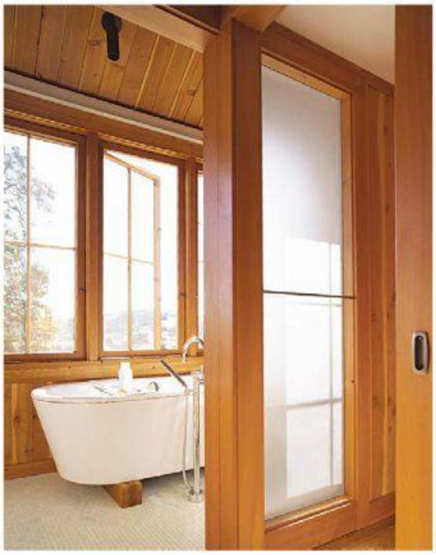
place of milled timbers. A log column holding up the roof typically has its branches left on it, functioning as natural struts and beams. Smaller twigs and branches provide decorative details. An Adirondack camp lodge looks like a log cabin, supersized and fit for a king, but the drama of the style conceals a practical side: It was a way for lodges of monumental scale to be built in the remote mountains because materials—in this case trees—could be harvested from the site.

Haesloop's firm, Turnbull Griffin Haesloop, is noted for helping pioneer an architectural approach distinctive to the San Francisco Bay Area: the Sea Ranch style, a form of rural modernism that eschews the rectangles and steel of the International Style for simple, shedlike forms and unpainted wood left to weather naturally. While designing the Kavner house, Haesloop realized that PISE walls were the key to bridging the Adirondack and Sea Ranch styles and giving the Kavners the house they were looking for. Thick earthwork walls would give the main house the drama of something much larger, like a mountain lodge, but also subtly refer to the early architecture of California, the Spanish mission.

Even more important, using PISE is one of the greenest ways to build, and thus it appealed to a desire of both the Kavners and Haesloop to tread lightly on the land. The house was sited in the shade of the forest, its main view framing a particularly grand oak, so active solar systems on the roof were ruled out. But PISE's mass turns out to be the perfect passive solar strategy to deal with the preserve's distinctive climate pattern of hot days and cool nights. "PISE is essentially on a shifted schedule, absorbing heat in the day and radiating it at night," explains Haesloop. "It acts as a thermal flywheel." In addition, the earth for the walls could be taken from the debris pile created by digging the house's foundation, making construction close to carbon-neutral.

Haesloop and his partner Mary Griffin designed the house around a large, barnlike wood-and-glass pavilion, buttressed on each side by PISE sheds.





Inside is a free-flowing open-plan layout with a living-dining room on one side and a library on the other. Upstairs are two modest bedrooms and bathrooms. Throughout, the massive PISE walls provide a counterpoint to the reclaimed wooden beams and peeled-cedar log posts. There's wood everywhere: paneled walls, wide-plank barn-wood floors, two staircases made from huge piles of stacked lumber—all of it reclaimed or certified sustainable.

Less obvious, but no less prevalent, are other passive solar touches: strategically placed high windows that open to let out hot air; fans on the porch making the outdoors comfortable on even the hottest, buggiest summer days; and plenty of cross ventilation. They're small elements, but they add up to a house that doesn't need air-conditioning, usually mandatory in the preserve's hot microclimate. Up the hill behind the house, two small guest houses are tucked into the forest, an arrangement that echoes the lodge-and-cabin placement of the Adirondack camp style. What's more, the setup allows the Kavners' main house to be quite compact, requiring less energy use when they're on their own.

When asked what she likes most about the house, Allyson says simply, "What you see is what you get," and then ticks off a number of examples. The zinc roof was deliberately left unpainted, so that water runs off clear. The log columns are not decorative details (though they fit the style); they actually hold up the roof. And then there is her favorite aspect of the house: the PISE hearth, chimney, and walls. In the construction phase the neighbors would invariably ask what color she was going to paint them, but in Allyson's view paint would be a shame. To her, PISE's natural dun color is "exquisite"—a reflection of its earthen origins and a reminder of the intention behind the home's design. "I wanted the house to complement the land," she says, "to be subservient, rather than stand up and wave and show the world how big and beautiful it was." And surveying the results contentedly, "I wanted it to fit in."

Photos by Matthew Millman

The house has the feel of a refined barn: The kitchen (top) flows into the dining area, then into a den. The two PISE "chimneys" serve to demarcate the transitions and visually unite the space. The master bath (middle) commands one of the best views in the house. The house (bottom) clearly displays its Sea Ranch-style touches. ❶

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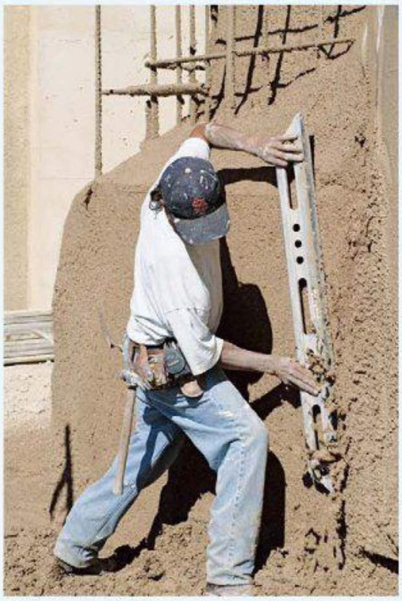
A Dirty Job

PISE is based on the rammed earth construction technique, or *pisé de terre*, that dates back to the Stone Age. The simple technique requires only hand tools. First a mixture of clay, sand, and gravel is prepared, then it's dumped bit by bit into a wall form. From an ecological standpoint, the technique is perfect—we will never run out of dirt, and the embodied-energy cost is zero.

David Easton coined the term PISE (short for "pneumatically impacted stabilized earth"), which echoes the French term for "rammed earth." Easton built his first rammed-earth wall in his early twenties. He founded his company, Rammed Earth Works, in 1975 and has authored several books about the technique. In the mid-1980s, Easton realized that if rammed earth were to live up to its potential, it would have to be adapted to new technologies as well as to local conditions. In California, where he is based, those include earthquakes, strict building codes, and high labor costs.

A crew of several people can build walls for an entire house in one day. A machine operator feeds the mix in and watches it; a "nozzle man" handles the gun, places the mix, and tamps it down by the force of the gun; a "finisher" armed with a trowel cuts the wall straight and true; and other workers assist, moving scaffolding and keeping the base of the wall clean. After just 24 hours, the form comes off, revealing a finished wall that, after curing and sealing, never needs to be painted or otherwise maintained.

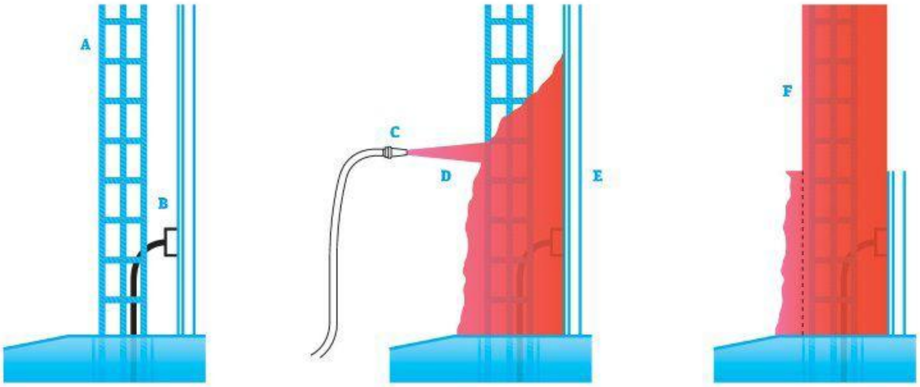
Easton has done PISE wineries, restaurants, and high-end homes, but it's PISE's untapped green potential that gets him most excited. The walls absorb heat in the day and radiate it back at night, a property that can keep a properly designed house comfortable 24/7. "People have known about the thermal properties of thick masonry walls forever, they are just very expensive to build," notes Easton. "PISE is by far the most cost-effective method."



Building Up the Wall

To increase the speed and flexibility of the technique, Easton began to run it through an off-the-shelf pneumatically powered concrete gun. Instead of being tamped down by hand into a two-sided wall form, the mix is blown into open-sided formwork.

A Open-sided formwork
B Electrical wiring
C Pneumatically powered concrete gun
D PISE mix
E Interior wall
F Completed PISE wall



Photos by Cynthia Wright

Click here:
More examples of Easton's work and an in-depth description of his process, can be found at rammedearthworks.com.

For an international survey of earthen building techniques, see eartharchitecture.org.

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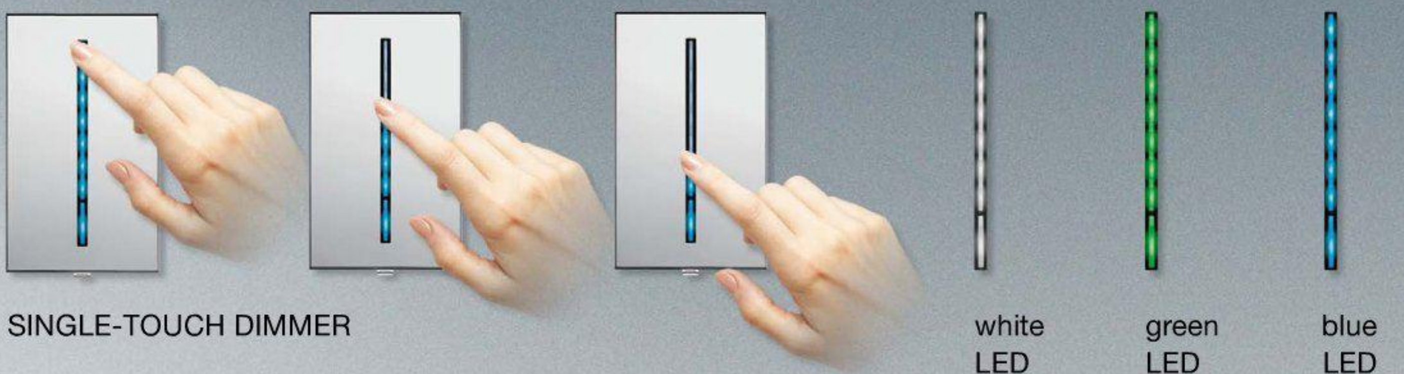

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Far from fickle, faucets function best when they're running hot and cold. These modern fixtures prove their mettle by making it oh-so-easy to go with the flow.

If you follow your mom's advice and wash your hands before every meal you'll likely lather up tens of thousands of times in your life, but the plumbing essentials that enable your habit are rarely considered with the appreciation they deserve. The faucet, like its fellow hard-working and reliable bathroom buddies the toilet and the shower, is a fixture that gets a whole lot of action but very little love.

Cognitive scientist, design consultant, and avid "everyday thing" enthusiast Don Norman shares with us his passion for these practical pieces and outlines the tenets that matter most when choosing your faucet.

"There are only two things you care about besides the appearance," he explains. "The amount of water coming out and the temperature." This seemingly simple balance between image and duty is one that Norman understands implicitly. As an engineer his priority is making sure things operate properly, but as a psychologist he argues that there's more to functionality than, well, functioning. "Emotions are really the most important part of life. Things have to work well, but they also should excite you." With that in mind we check out the curves, handle the handles, and lift the levers to determine which lavatory taps are tops.

Fairest Faucet

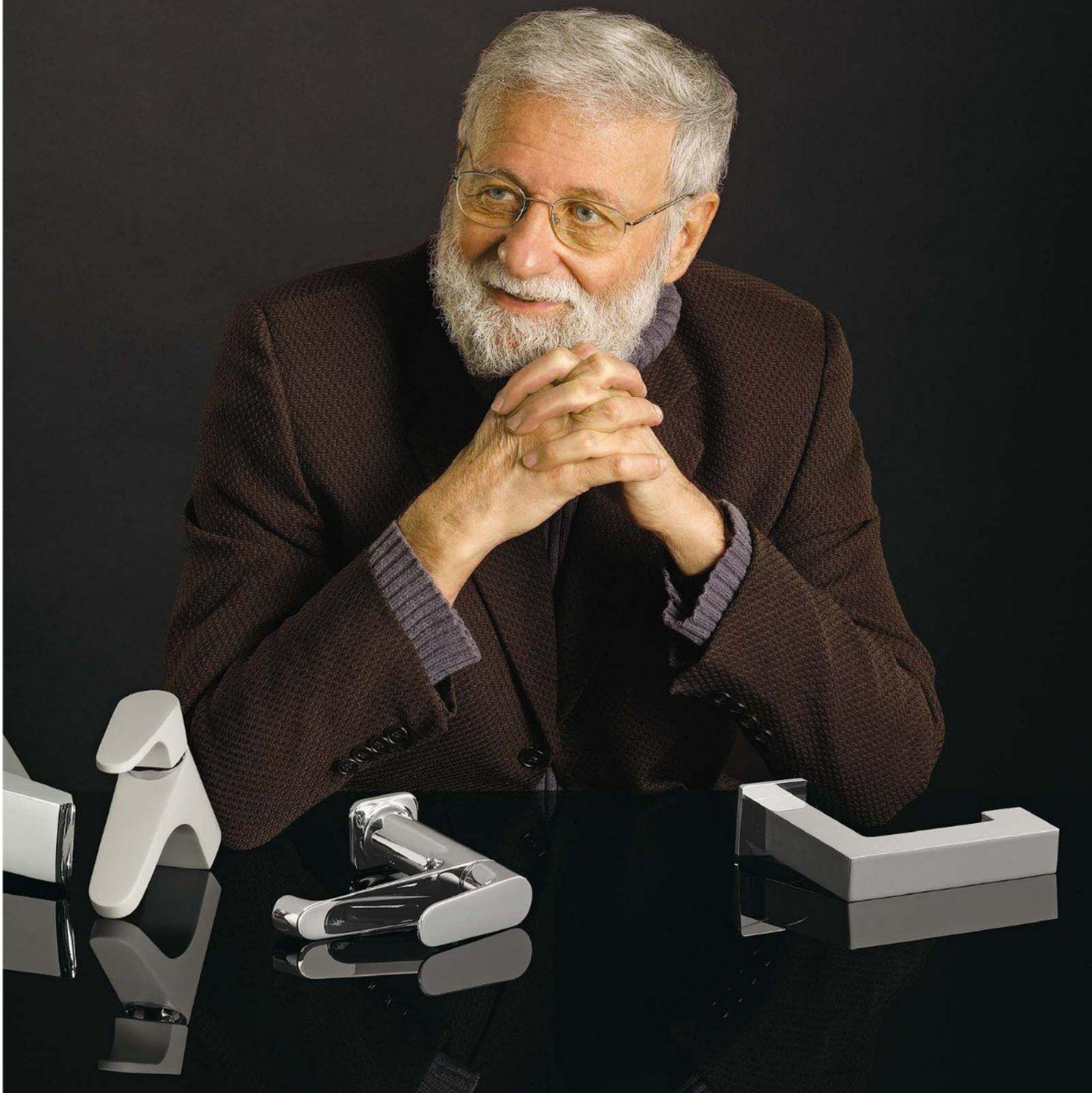
Xenon 3 Hole basin filler by Samuel Heath / Available in chrome plate and stainless steel finishes / From $667 / samuel-heath.com

Expert Opinion: This faucet includes the control for the drain valve, and from a functional point of view, it's incredibly convenient to be able to open and shut the drain from above. If the faucet ignores that feature, you're either going to have a drain you can't operate, or it's going to be one of those ugly manual ones. I think the lack of back plate is quite neat here. This faucet would look particularly nice on a granite countertop.

What We Think: Individually installed spout and hot and cold controls form a more perfect union with the surface of the sink without the need for an escutcheon intermediary. The slick round knobs would certainly be slippery when wet, but the small ridges make for a more secure grip between soapy fingers. We're also fond of the umbrella-handle arc of the spout.

Story by Jordan Kushins
Photos by Peter Belanger

A Note on Our Expert:
Don Norman is a man committed to sussing out the way things work. His early career had him finding flaws in the poorly planned control room at Three Mile Island and becoming passionate about products while at Apple Computer. Currently, he teaches MBA students about operations and design as a professor at Northwestern University and counsels businesses on developing human-centered priorities as cofounder of the Nielsen Norman Group, a corporate consultancy firm. Forever fascinated by pushing on "pull" doors and long rows of switches where nobody remembers which switch does what, Norman explores our collective relationship to successful user-focused design in his books *The Design of Everyday Things* and *Emotional Design: Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things*.



Oblo wall-mount lavatory faucet by Kohler / Available in polished chrome, polished nickel, and brushed nickel finishes / $340 / us.kohler.com

Expert Opinion: The form is elegant, and because wall mounts are much less of a hassle to clean than sink mounts, it would definitely maintain its gleam over time. Generally, back plates simplify the mounting (and sometimes allow for sloppy installation), but the single plate that links these elements really makes them into a harmonious single unit; it doesn't feel like it's covering up anything.

What We Think: Vertical orientation might be an effective way to free up space on your sink, unclutter your countertop, and make for an easy polish job, but we worry about wayward suds and splatters leaving a trail down the wall. We're suckers for simplicity, though, and the minimal shapes and smooth gloss of Kohler's piece outshine the competition. We agree with our expert that the Oblo is a stylish faucet with nothing to hide.

Wosh single-lever basin mixer by Zucchetti / Available in chrome, platinum, and gold finishes / $1,318 / zucchettidesign.it

Expert Opinion: I think that flow is a very important part of the faucet experience, and I love how the Zucchetti Wosh makes use of the water itself. Why on earth not have the stream giving both aesthetic and kinesthetic pleasure as it goes over your hands? The joystick is quite unusual but looks like it's easy to use when your hands are soapy. It's imposing, stunning, clean, and my personal pick for favorite of them all.

What We Think: Unconventional in both form and function, this is an ultramodern statement spout that declares its luxury loud and clear, a faceted faucet that resembles an oversized gem and stands up to the others in terms of sheer stature alone. We can appreciate the flattened flow of the water and unique geometry, but believe it would take quite an opulent powder room to complement the Wosh.

Tara. single-hole basin mixer by Dornbracht / Available in matte white, matte black, polished chrome, platinum matte, and platinum finishes / $1,212 / dornbracht.com

Expert Opinion: Black is an unusual color for the bathroom, and it adds some visual interest to what is usually an all-white space. The spigot has an attractive arc, and the two old-fashioned, four-pointed handles provide a nice contrast and complexity to an otherwise sleek, direct formation. This is a truly striking faucet.

What We Think: X-marks-the-spot handles are easy to grasp and turn and the double-handled design wins points for originality. This is one of the tallest faucets featured, so the orientation of cabinets and mirrors above it would be a factor, as would decor that coordinates with something other than porcelain and heavy metals. We're partial to polished chrome, but matte black gives the Tara. a modern edge that might just be daring enough to make us turn to the dark side. ▸

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C-blu from the Bluprint Collection by AquaBrass / Available in polished chrome, brushed nickel, matte black, and matte white / From $339 / aquabrass.com

Expert Opinion: I often use the bathroom in the middle of the night and don't want to turn the bright lights on, so I want a faucet to work just by feeling. C-blu is easy to grip and move, and I believe it would function just fine in the dark. The chrome joint detracts some from the minimalist visual, but you can't see it from above and I don't actually mind it. I find the white clean, attractive, and a nice touch.

What We Think: We imagine c-blu would make an attractive silhouette on a pristine porcelain sink, but wonder whether the matte white would withstand consistent smudging from our fingertips. The compact shape is almost quaint in comparison with some of the larger, more elaborate designs, but we feel this is a strong choice for a smaller faucet.

Axor Citterio M single-hole faucet by Hansgrohe / Available in chrome and brushed nickel finishes / From $470 / hansgrohe-int.com

Expert Opinion: I like the single-lever faucets because you're controlling directly what is of psychological importance—one direction in charge of amount, and the other temperature—so in principle, it's a better design than those with individual hot and cold controls. With this particular faucet, though, I don't see anything going for it aesthetically. If I were looking for something for my home I would skim over this one.

What We Think: Designed by Italian architect Antonio Citterio and winner of an International Forum Gold Award in 2008, this single lever has some serious street cred even if it didn't catch the eye of our expert. We like the contrast between the rounded shapes and square base plate and think its sleek lines would befit a well-kept contemporary bathroom.

Axiom EcoPower sensor faucet by Toto / Polished chrome finish / $1,153 / totousa.com

Expert Opinion: Hurrah for the unusual rectangular shape! I love the right angles and simple, solid cross section, but the technology behind the design is where Toto truly shines. I'm a big fan of the antiscalding control, and the self-generating electricity means I won't have to worry about the battery for ten years. As an all-purpose piece it has many limitations, but if you're just coming in quickly, rinsing your hands, and leaving, it's perfect.

What We Think: If the thought of using a sensor faucet seems more airport layover than home hospitality, the Axiom might change your mind. This spout would sit best in a guest or secondary bathroom for a hands-off approach that offers a no-fuss take on washing. Set the temperature for a standard sluice and never worry about running water or post-teeth-brushing drip.

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Groundbreaking Design

It has been nearly half a decade, but the Dwell Home II is back! Construction began this winter in the hills outside Los Angeles, and a true model of domestic sustainability takes shape.

When we reported more than four years ago that the Dwell Home II, designed by Los Angeles-based firm Escher GuneWardena Architecture, would be built on a hillside site in Topanga Canyon, we had no idea that construction wouldn't begin until the fall of 2008. But patience is a virtue in home design and permitting—and the commissioning homeowners, Glen Martin and Claudia Plasencia, had enough of that to go around.

The story of the Dwell Home II will doubtless be familiar to long-term readers, but it's worth looking back at the project to see what the fuss has been about—especially when the impulse behind the design remains so inspiring. We kicked off the Dwell Home II Design Invitational back in the winter of 2004 with the modest goal of creating a new model for sustainable residential home design. Martin and Plasencia enthusiastically stepped in to volunteer their own plot of land as a future site for the project, and in collaboration with Dwell they picked an original and ambitious home design by Escher GuneWardena.

Fast-forward to spring 2009, and the home has broken ground, construction is well under way, and the residents are chomping at the bit to move in.

Martin's original interest in the project came from an unexpected source. When he moved to California in 1991, it was to Huntington Beach, where he took a job in the aerospace industry, working for McDonnell Douglas on the International Space Station. Martin stayed there for roughly seven years, soon getting involved with "all sorts of interesting stuff," he says, including collaborative testing projects with NASA astronauts at the Weightless Environment Training Facility over in Houston. McDonnell Douglas's location in Huntington Beach was the same ▸

Story by Geoff Manaugh

This rendering of the Dwell Home II's exterior shows the perforated screen that lets air into the house, without the use of a pump, as part of a passive cooling system.

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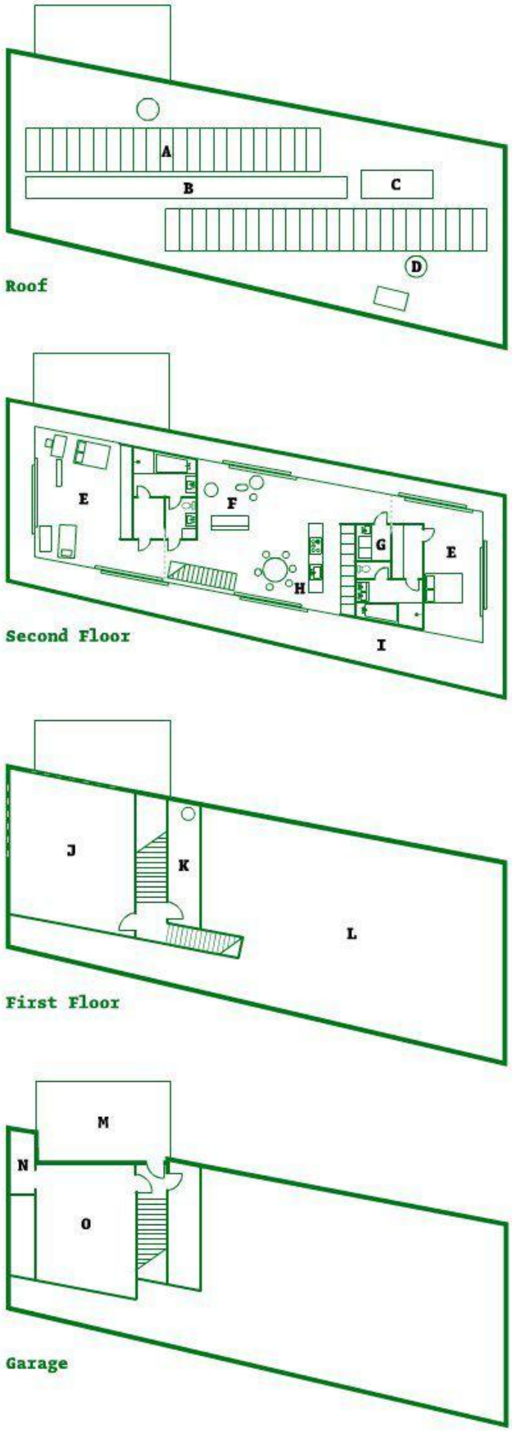

Dwell Home II Floor Plan

- **A** Solar Panels
- **B** Hydronic Roof Radiators
- **C** Solar Hot Water Panels
- **D** Skylight
- **E** Bedroom
- **F** Living Room
- **G** Laundry Room
- **H** Kitchen/Dining Area
- **I** Veranda
- **J** Office
- **K** Mechanical Room
- **L** Crawl Space with Natural Ground
- **M** Driveway
- **N** Storage
- **O** Garage

facility that had developed Controlled Ecological Life Support Systems in the 1960s, including water- and air-recycling technologies.

"I got very familiar with the technological constraints of being in a closed environment," Martin explains, "and I've always kept that in the back of my mind. When it came time to build our own house, and Claudia and I sold our old home, we got thinking about what we really wanted out of the structure." And what they really wanted was "an integrated system—not unlike a space station."

"When we wrote the original creative brief for the design competition," he continues, still sounding genuinely interested in the process after all these years, "we realized that there were two very different approaches to making a project green. One way is that you just substitute certain materials with a recycled something or other, and you call it green; the other is that you really think about the house itself as a living system. And Escher GuneWardena really thought about the house. They pushed the envelope of home design, and they created something that would capture all the benefits of living in Southern California."

The home's many green features include a 360-degree, wraparound veranda that allows for easy indoor-outdoor living; proper site orientation for winter and summer sun exposure; the installation of a backyard leach field instead of an infrastructural connection to the city sewage system; and a radiant floor, which uses small pores at foot level, called floor air channels, as vents for the passive cooling system. Cleverly disguised holes on the outside of the house—a screen that otherwise appears ornamental—let cool air into a crawl space located beneath the house, where it circulates before diffusing throughout the rest of the structure via the radiant floor.

Finally, after many long years of financial and bureaucratic delays, Martin and Plasencia's space station in the Los Angeles hills is taking shape. Martin jokes that they often felt like characters in a Kafka novel—and, indeed, the lengthy process taught them some surprising lessons about building green in the City of Angels. For instance, even in an era of ecologically responsible home landscaping, Martin and Plasencia were stunned to find that the fire department actively discourages the use of native plant life—because the desert botany of the region presents far too strong a fire hazard.

Stay tuned: We'll be checking in regularly with both the homeowners and the project architects to see how construction is progressing. ▮

Photovoltaic panels and a green roof will cap the project. They will also work to integrate the house into the natural setting.

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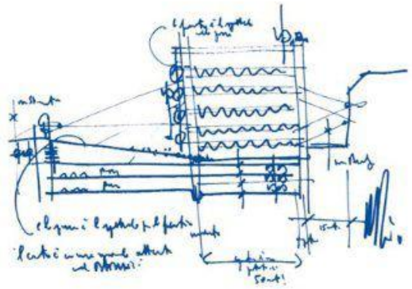
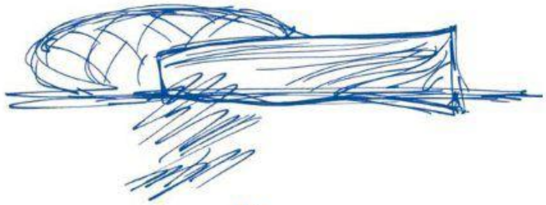
The Citizen, The Technician, and The Naturalist



Centre Pompidou



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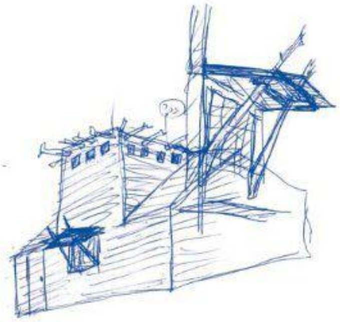


Futu-an workshop

At Dwell we've sung from the green hymnal for years, touting the environmental and aesthetic benefits of sustainable residential design. And though we might spend more time in our homes than in any other building, except for maybe the office, those homes are in neighborhoods, and those neighborhoods are in cities—and those cities form regions all over the world. Designing a sustainable future means looking beyond our backyards at the very systems that keep us going.

This issue presents three pioneers of sustainable design whose vision, foresight, and fame extend well past the front door. In expanding our scope of sustainability to include bridges, museums, breweries, even a temporary structure for the Pope, we hope to show that concentric circles of architecture radiate out from the home to include nearly everything about how we live, and how we ought to.

We examine the career of an architect who has always seemed to be somewhere in the future. Richard Rogers's 1971–1977 collaboration with Renzo Piano on the Centre Pompidou in Paris still feels like a gift 30 years ahead of its time. Concerned largely with grander projects since his first brush with fame, Rogers imagines sustainable cities, dense urban hubs reorganized to meet the needs of the next millennium. And few understand better than Rogers that any imagined future rests entirely on choices made now.

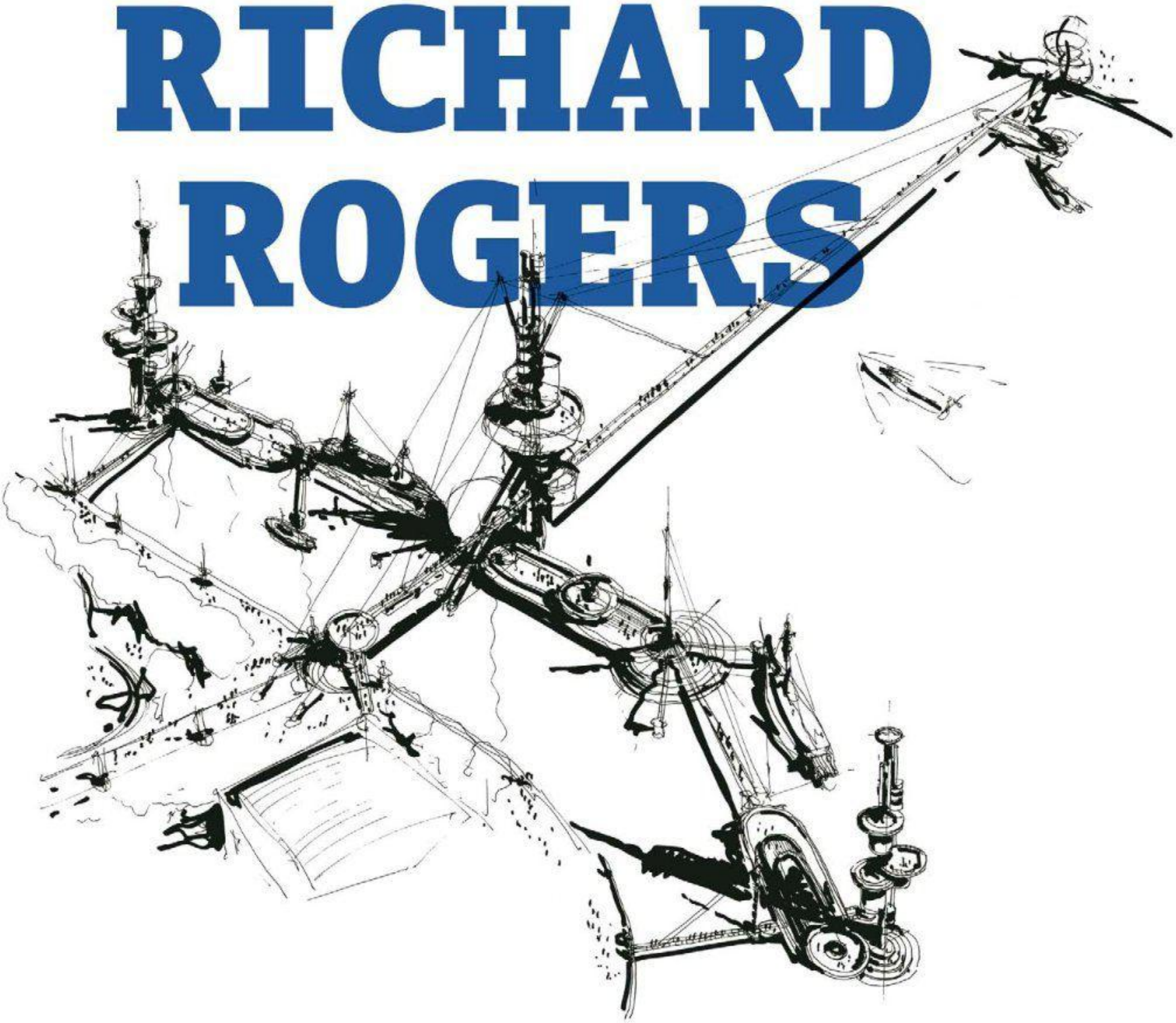
German engineer and architect Werner Sobek has been at his craft's bleeding edge for decades. His embrace of technology is as profound as Rogers's, as Sobek's bridges, airports, and elegant offices all attest. He might be called a reluctant green evangelist, though: Instead of couching his progressiveness in terms of healing Mother Earth, he instead prefers to think of radical efficiency as a moral imperative. Sobek's ongoing series of green houses lacks nothing in terms of contemporary aesthetics, yet they've been constructed to be entirely recyclable. That producing less waste permits us to tread more lightly on the planet is merely a happy side effect of working as efficiently as possible.

Finally we profile Terunobu Fujimori, a Japanese architect apparently agnostic to the notion of "sustainability" (a term that, in its ecological sense, has been around only since 1980). Nonetheless, Fujimori's work is an environmentalist's dream, filtering the preoccupations of the International Style through the rather more bracing forms and materials of our collective Neolithic past.

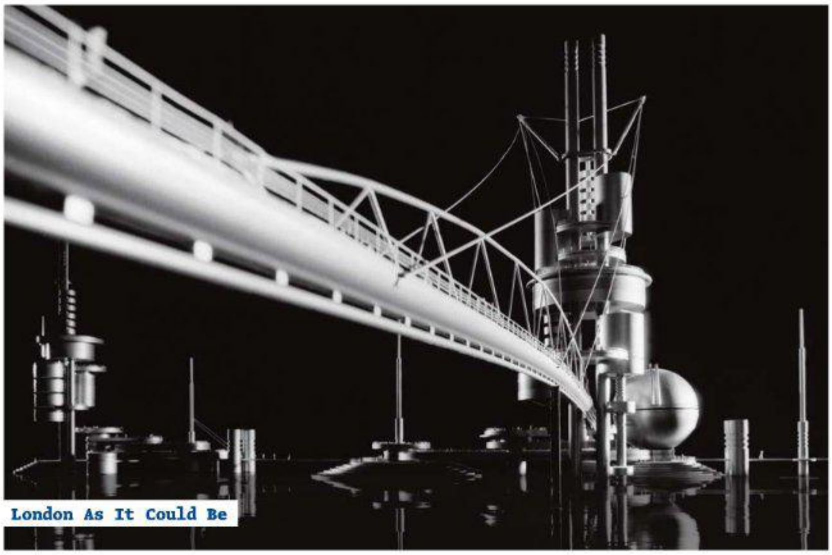
So permit us to step momentarily outside of our houses and neighborhoods, explore the surrounding context, and examine three luminaries who possess vastly divergent aesthetics—even different worldviews—but who remain united around one common global concern.

—Aaron Britt

RICHARD ROGERS



The architecture of Richard Rogers weds the best of high-tech design with the outer limits of the architect's imagination, creating soaring, sustainable spaces that enrich everyday urban life.



London As It Could Be

Photo and sketch by Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners

Story by Geoff Manaugh

For an exhibition organized by London's Royal Academy in 1986, architect Richard Rogers produced a new vision of the city dubbed *London As It Could Be*. The project gave Rogers an opportunity to imagine a near-complete transformation of central London. In an accompanying text, he wrote that the purpose of a city is "for the meeting of friends and strangers in civilized public spaces surrounded by beautiful architecture," and his installation of plans and models was a wonderful visualization of that statement. Think of it as sci-fi humanism: remaking the city to frame what humans should really be.

London As It Could Be presented visitors with enormous structural masts anchored on the banks of the Thames, from which future offices and living spaces could be hung. A pedestrian superbridge would span the river, with new walking routes opened up between Piccadilly Circus and Trafalgar Square. This would create a city built to serve not the spatial needs of the automobile industry but the cultural needs of its living residents.

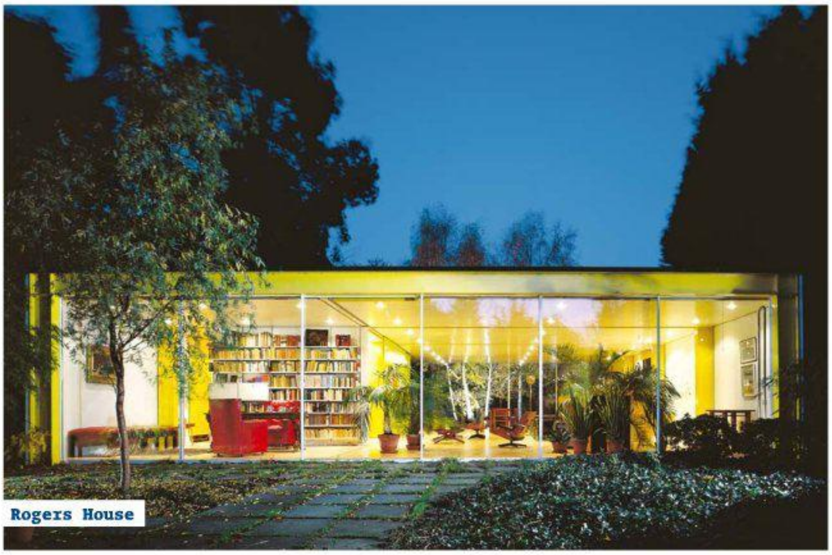
Lord Richard Rogers, born in 1933 in Florence, Italy, a 1962 graduate of the Yale School of Architecture, and recipient of the 2007 Pritzker Prize, is most often associated with a generation of British architects, including Norman Foster, Nicholas Grimshaw, and James Stirling, known for their structurally bold and technologically expressive work. *London As It Could Be* showed off the most socially beneficial impulses behind this high-tech design strategy, revealing Rogers's ability—often more sharply honed than in the work of his peers—to explore a different kind of sustainability, one intimately connected to the experiential fabric of the city.

Of course, some critics would have us believe that Rogers's buildings, whether the now-canonical Lloyd's of London headquarters or the Centre Pompidou in Paris designed with Renzo Piano, bring a bleak modernist chill to the streetscape. But if only one lesson is to be learned from these buildings, it is that a work of architecture can anticipate and even catalyze a different kind of streetlife, one motivated by curiosity and a desire to linger. My own experience of this effect comes through the Channel 4 building in the London borough of Westminster, designed by Rogers in the early 1990s to house the once cutting-edge television studio. That building, with its glass walls, external elevators, and color-coded maintenance infrastructure, backs directly onto the apartment complex in which my in-laws live. Over the course of nearly a decade, I have walked past and into the mechanics of that space far too many times to count—and there is always someone outside, gazing up at the building, as if to deduce how its maze of parts really works. I realized one day that this was a kind of futurist baroque—where, instead of carved ornament and stone statuary, we see glass and steel details almost constantly on the move. The building's near-infinite points on which a pedestrian can focus provide a moment of intense visual interest in the otherwise undifferentiated mass of the modern, car-oriented city. ▸

Channel 4 Headquarters

London As It Could Be (opposite), exhibited in 1986, seems more like the elaborate set of an unreleased science-fiction film than a serious proposal for the redesign of central London, but its radical ideas for updating the city remain both timely and stimulating.

The headquarters for Channel 4 (above), completed in 1994 in the borough of Westminster, are a particularly accessible example of Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners' machinic sensibilities. The Rogers House (below), built in 1969 for Rogers's parents, was "a transparent, flexible tube which would be adapted and extended," offering freedom of layout through flexibility of design.



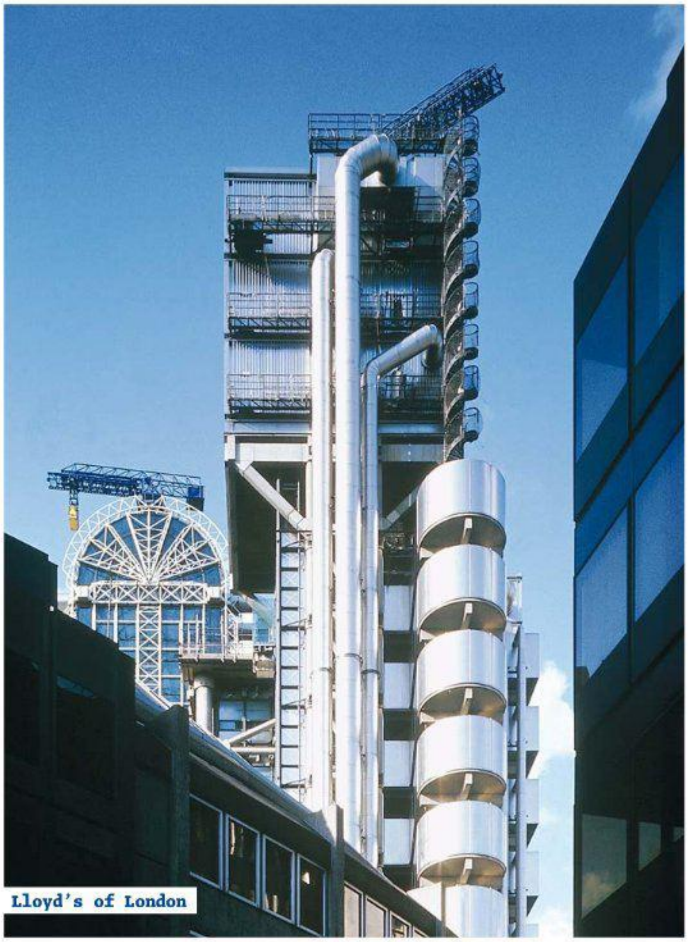
Rogers House

Photos by David Churchill/arcaid.co.uk (Channel 4), Richard Bryant/arcaid.co.uk

Witness the crowds gathered in front of the Centre Pompidou at almost all hours of the day, for instance, and you'll see proof that a new style of building can catalyze a radically different kind of engagement with urban space: a more communal approach to other residents of the city. Indeed, as Rogers has been saying all along through lectures, books, and newspaper articles, the structure of the city itself must be reimagined, building by building and street by street, to help make way for a new type of urban civilization—one that is not only healthier, but also culturally and environmentally sustainable.

When I meet with Rogers at his riverside office in Hammersmith, I enter the renovated brick building through a lobby of glass cases in which the firm's most recent models are on display. Rogers, who partnered in the 1990s with senior director Graham Stirk and director Ivan Harbour to form Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (RSHP), is quick to smile, often flashing a puzzled grin as if to suggest there's something more to say—but he'll refrain, politely, for now.

With a light rain falling into the Thames outside, Rogers begins by enthusiastically reiterating the task of rethinking the very texture of the modern metropolis and the urgent need to build "compact, polycentric cities" united by public transportation. I ask him and Harbour about their recent work, including the houses at Oxley Woods. Oxley Woods is a development designed by RSHP for a site outside Milton Keynes, England, in response to a 2005 competition called Design for Manufacture. The houses are unusual in appearance—seeming at first far too geometric and boldly colored ever to feel quite like home. But it's what's under the hood, so to speak, that deserves further discussion. Harbour and Rogers each point out that the houses were built on "an inherited site," as Rogers terms it; the architects ▸



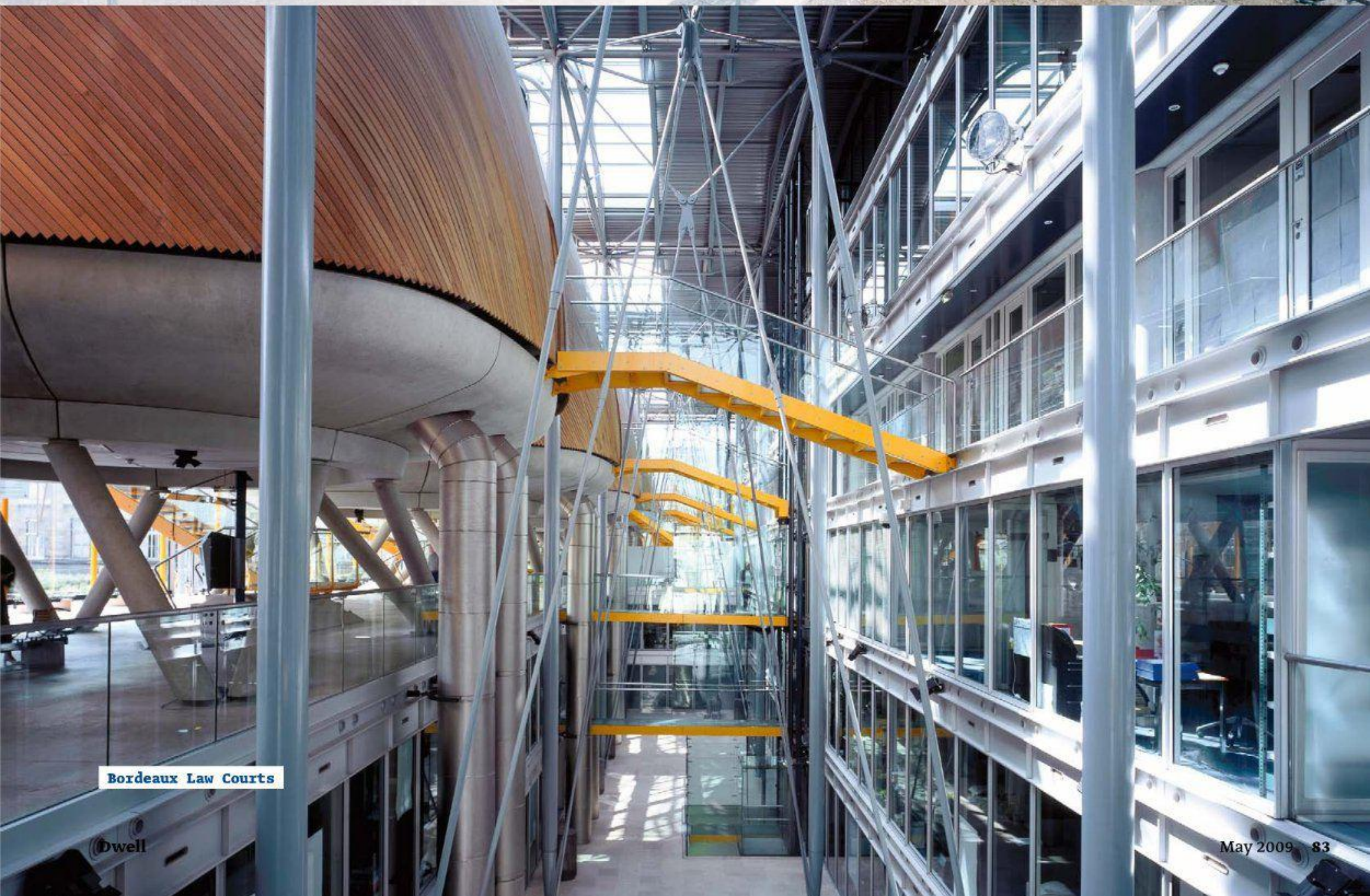
Lloyd's of London

Centre Pompidou

Lloyd's of London (above), one of RSHP's most famous projects, opened to the public in 1986, becoming an instant icon of British high-tech design. The building remains popular today as a film location. The Centre Pompidou in Paris (left) opened in 1977 and was a collaboration between Rogers and fellow Pritzker Prize-winner Renzo Piano. Completed in 2008, the addition to the Bodegas Protos winery (opposite, top) in Spain includes over a mile of underground tunnels for aging wine. The Bordeaux Law Courts (opposite, bottom) were finished in 1998. Seven cedar-clad "pods" hold the actual courtrooms.

Photos by Richard Bryant/arcaid.co.uk (Lloyd's), Katsuhisa Kida/FOTOTECA (Pompidou, Bodegas Protos, Bordeaux Law Courts)

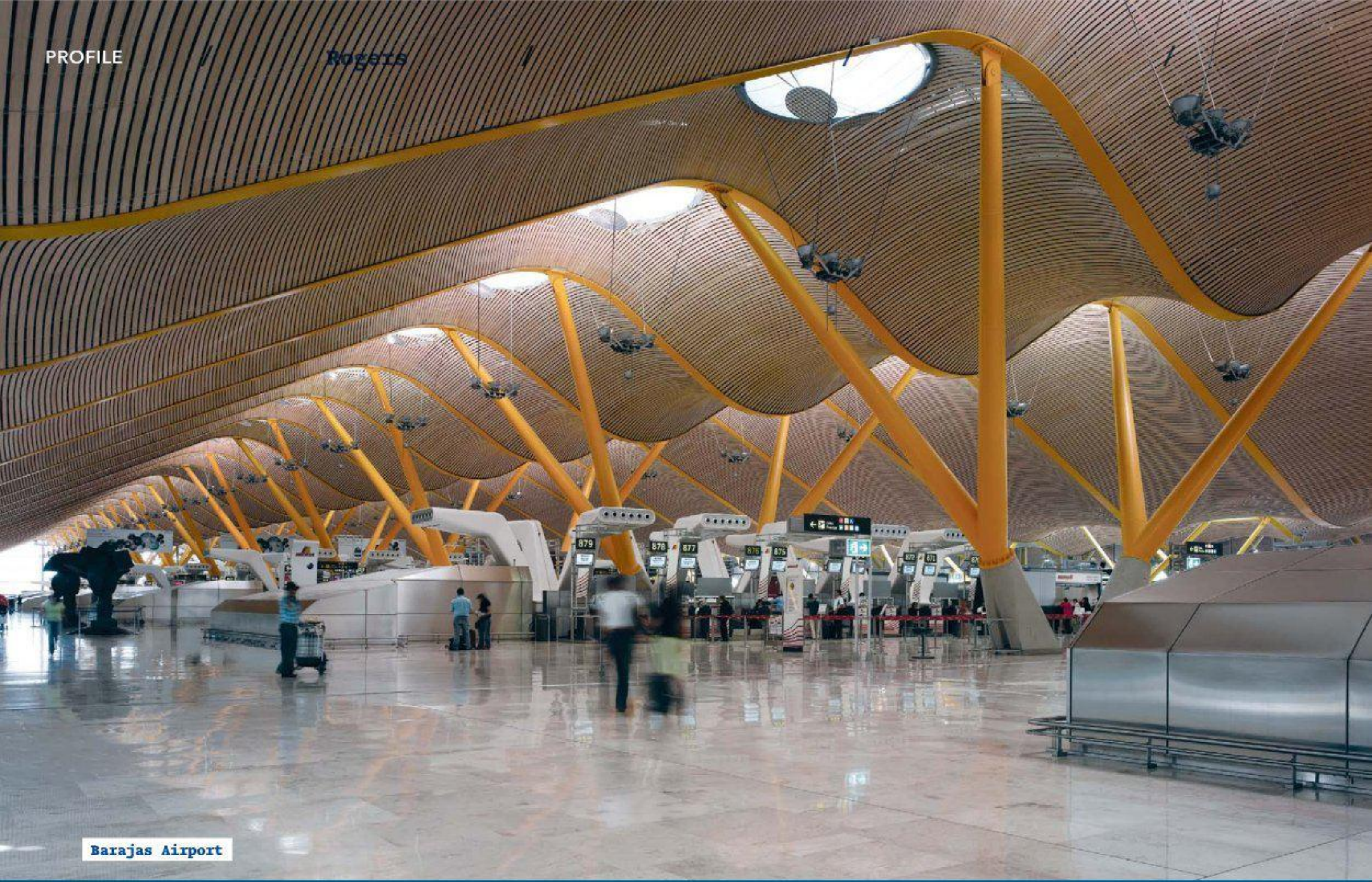
Bodegas Protos Winery



Bordeaux Law Courts

National Assembly of Wales

Photos by Redshift Photography 2006



Barajas Airport

"Design is not an added expense; it is an added value. Design often makes the difference between a place that simply exists, hoping to attract new residents and workers, and a place that can thrive for many years to come—which is the most sustainable result of all."

Terminal 5, Heathrow Airport

would have designed the street grid differently if they had had the chance to do so. Harbour adds that the houses took shape through "clever ways of using wood," including prefabricated panels made from sustainably harvested European softwoods and a paper-based internal insulation. The components were delivered flat-pack, greatly reducing construction waste, with the added benefit that each home's "external envelope" was ready in a mere two days.

But there is more to sustainability than the use of clever materials, Harbour says: "It's important to ask with all of these projects 'Why would someone live here?' You can't just build something and expect people to want to live there—or expect it to be sustainable. But you can deliver a reason to live there through design. The design itself can be something that will give people a shared point of reference, creating a community of people with similar goals, like waste reduction or energy efficiency. Living somewhere becomes pursuing something together." Rogers agrees: "Design is not an added expense; it is an added value. Design often makes the difference between a place that simply exists, hoping to attract new residents and workers, and a place that can thrive for many years to come—which is the most sustainable result of all."

This idea of bringing people together through the shared value of a sustainable lifestyle leads me to ask Rogers about his Living Over The Shop (LOTS) program, which, before it lost government funding, sought to bring people back into the urban core by changing tax codes. Rogers seems to brighten at the question: "Yes. Changing tax codes is not architectural, but it can have very clear urban effects. If you change taxes, transport options, and street design all to encourage—even necessitate—a different way of living in the city, a different type of city in which people can live, then you've succeeded in moving closer to a city that will really work."

How might this be reflected in something like London's plans for the 2012 Olympics? I suggest that the Olympics inspired a brief moment in the history of the city when everyone, from architects to shopkeepers and housewives, was given implicit permission to redream London and assess anew what the city might yet become. Rogers seems hesitant to ally himself with the Olympics; one senses that things are simply too far along and too plagued by administrative missteps, even three years ahead of time, to offer much room for inspiration. But "Barcelona," he says, and the grin comes back, "Barcelona nailed it in 1992. They used the Olympics as an opportunity to improve the city, to do things they would not have been able to do at any other time. They attracted new residents, rewarded current ones, and set into place long-term projects of strong urban thinking."

It's clear, in other words, that transforming the everyday urban world is possible. Making our own cities green—let alone more exciting for both residents and visitors alike—is something we could, in fact, do. The key, Rogers might say, is knowing when to act, and taking every opportunity as it comes. ▌▌▌▌

One Hyde Park

Madrid's intensely spacious Barajas Airport (opposite, top), completed in 2005, includes a massive sequence of color-coded columns, each vaulting up to the bamboo ceiling from massive plinths. The exterior of Heathrow's Terminal 5 (opposite, bottom), a $6.5-billion addition to the ailing London airport, gives no sign of the huge open spaces and structural pyrotechnics within. The flats at One Hyde Park (above) have become notorious for their sheer expense: With some units priced at an unreal $125 million, they are some of the most expensive housing in the UK. The houses at Oxley Woods (below), however, are a more modest case study in sustainable design and innovative construction. ℹ

Oxley Woods

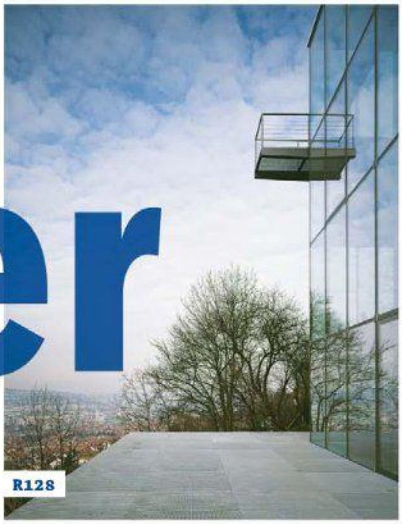
Photos by Richard Bryant/arcaid.co.uk (Madrid Airport), Katsuhisa Kida/FOTOTECA (Heathrow Airport, Oxley Woods), Photomontage by Hayes Davidson

Altar Roof for Benedict XVI

Werner Sobek has seen the future, and it's high-tech, green, and efficient. The architect, engineer, and teacher's wandering intellect and belief in the power of design have left their marks across disciplines and continents.

Werner

SWM Heilbronn



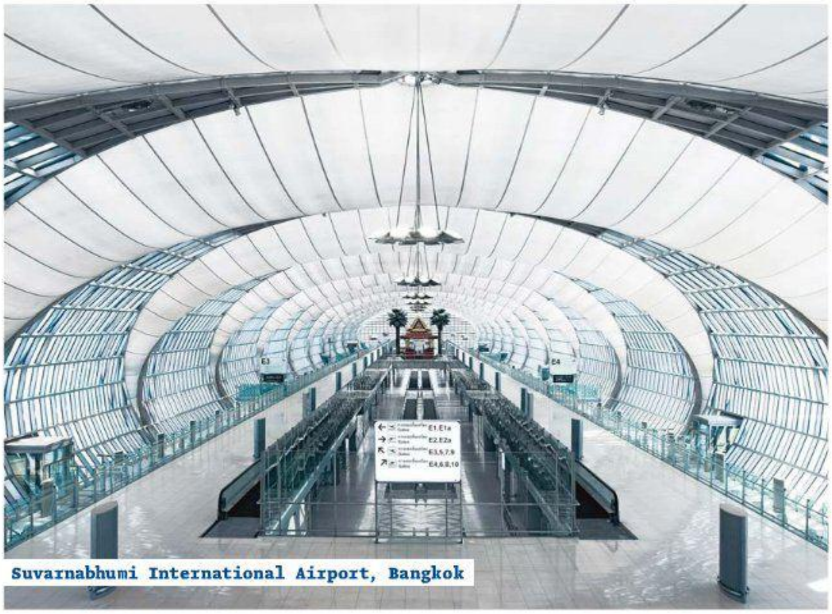
R128

Airport Chair

H16

Photos by Zooey Braun PHOTOGRAPHY (Altar Roof/H16), Johannes Marburg (SWM Heilbronn), Wolfgang Schmidberger (Airport Chair), Roland Halbe (R128)

Werner Sobek's unusual background—he is trained as both an architect and an engineer—has engendered a profound interest in a variety of spheres, from chemical manufacturing to airplane engineering. He is particularly enthusiastic about textiles (the altar he built for the Pope's visit to Bavaria in 2006 makes use of a fabric "tent"), which he finds both tactilely pleasing and rife with potential for high-tech applications like solar energy harvesting. Sobek acts as the main architect in about 20 percent of his company's projects (including his own house, R128). Seventy percent of the firm's output is providing advanced engineering know-how to other architects (the super-high-tech Bangkok airport, the stainless-steel-encased office building SWM Heilbronn, and Burda Media Park), with the rest devoted to industrial design (like the Airport chair).

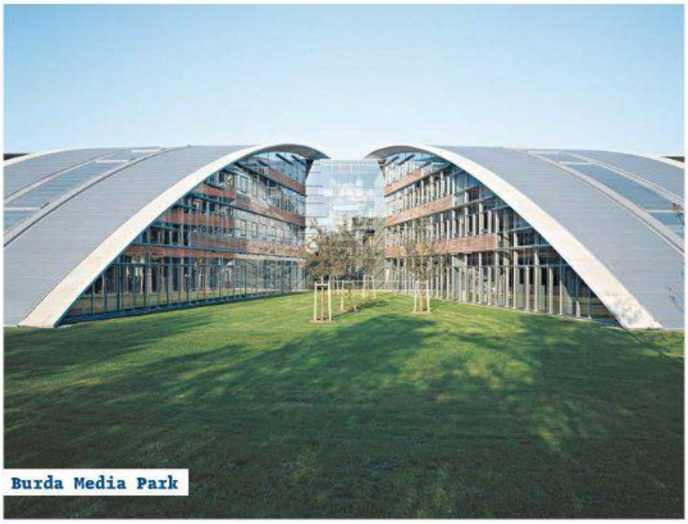

Suvarnabhumi International Airport, Bangkok

Hamburg Cruise Center

Sobek

Story by Sally McGrane
Portrait by Baerbel Schmidt

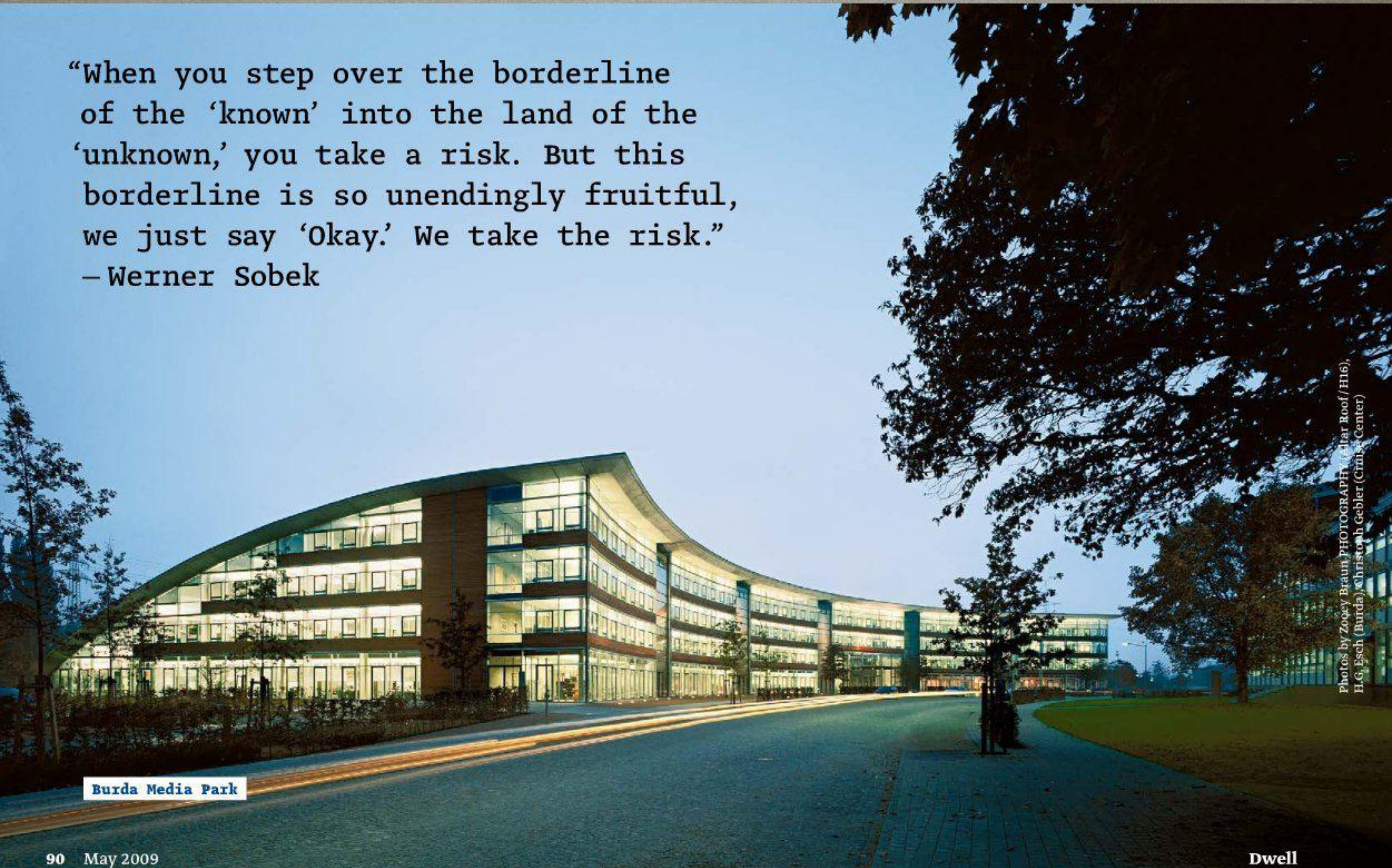
Hamburg Cruise Center


Burda Media Park

Photos by Juergen Schaefer (Cruise Center containers), Christoph Gebler (Cruise Center building), Rainer Viertlboeck (airport), H.G. Esch (Burda)

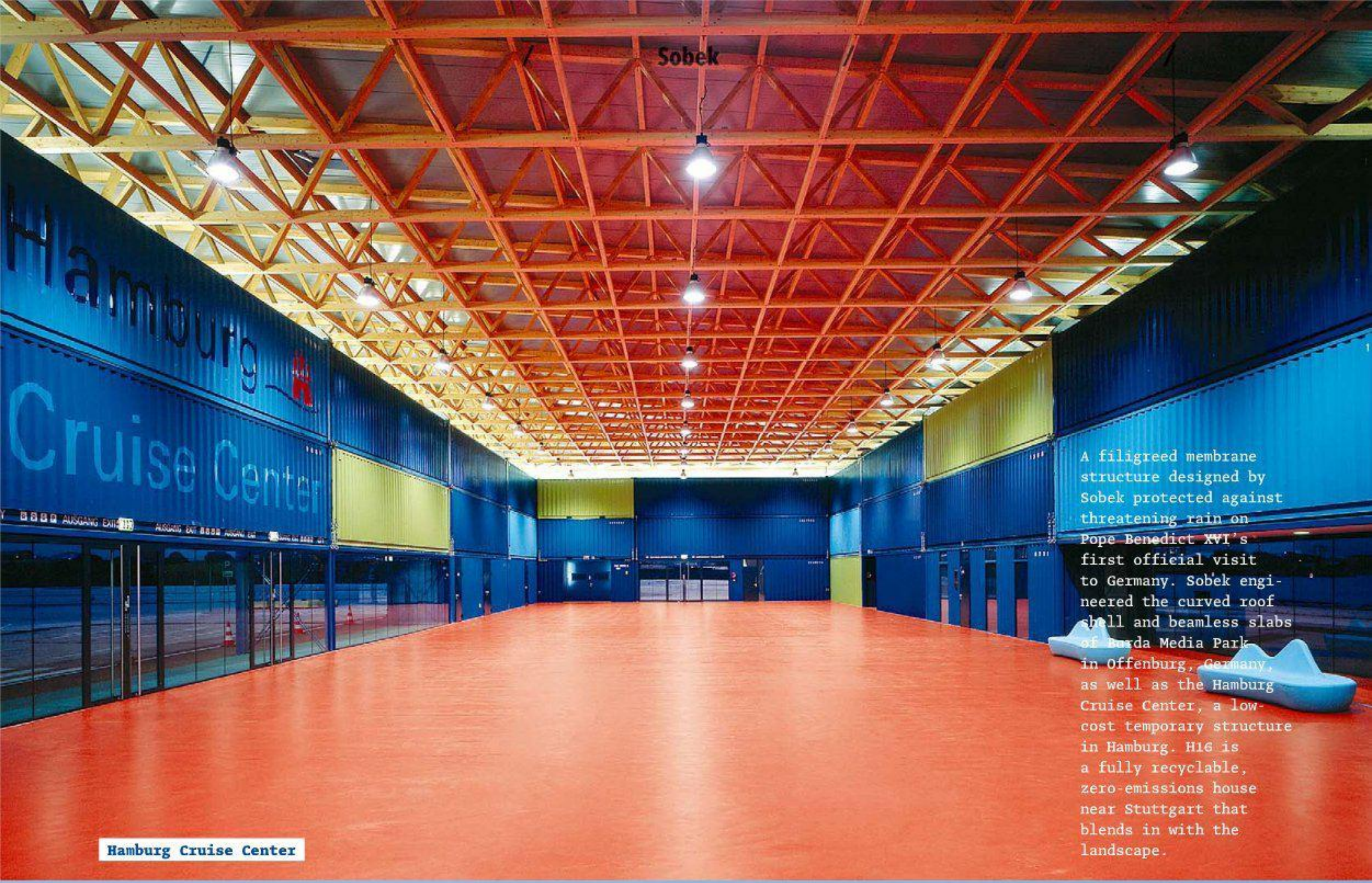
Altar Roof for Benedict XVI

"When you step over the borderline of the 'known' into the land of the 'unknown,' you take a risk. But this borderline is so unendingly fruitful, we just say 'Okay.' We take the risk."
—Werner Sobek



Burda Media Park

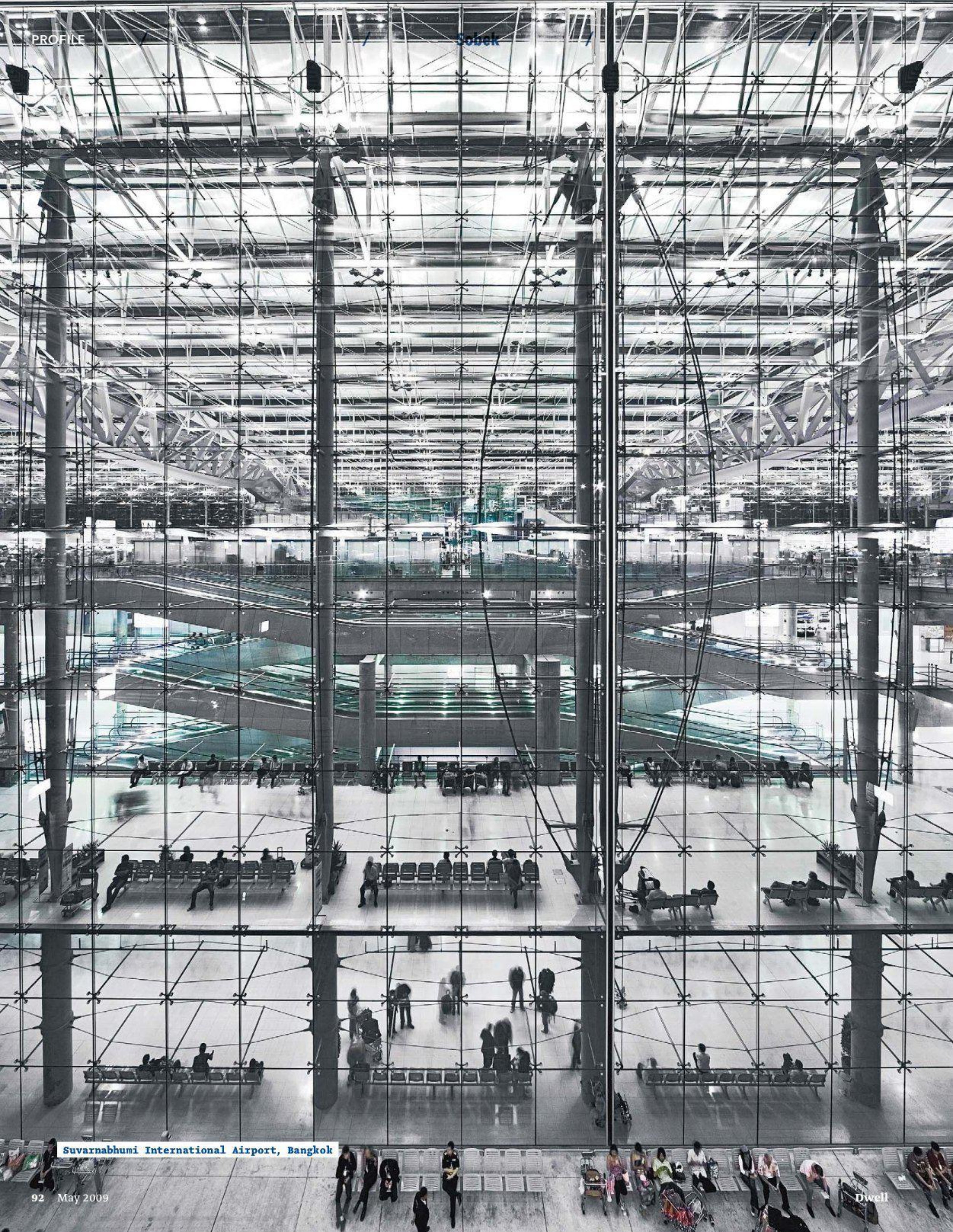
Photos by Zooey Braun PHOTOGRAPHY (Altar Roof / H16), H.G. Esch (Burda), Christoph Gebler (Cruise Center)



Hamburg Cruise Center

A filigreed membrane structure designed by Sobek protected against threatening rain on Pope Benedict XVI's first official visit to Germany. Sobek engineered the curved roof shell and beamless slabs of Burda Media Park in Offenburg, Germany, as well as the Hamburg Cruise Center, a low-cost temporary structure in Hamburg. H16 is a fully recyclable, zero-emissions house near Stuttgart that blends in with the landscape.

H16

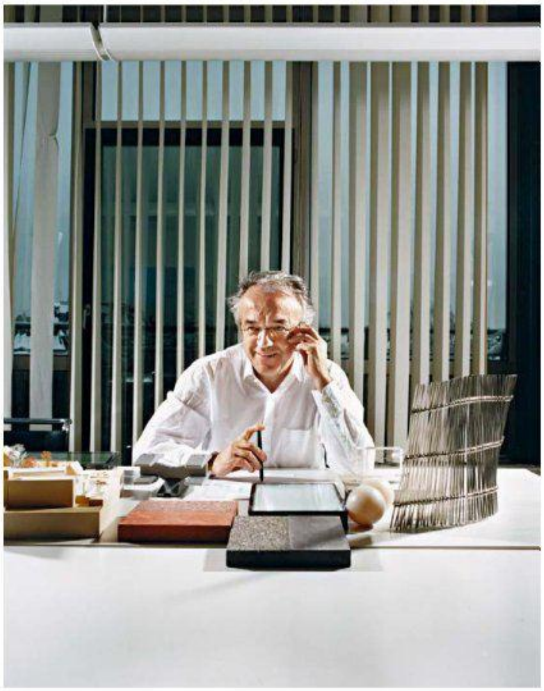


Suvarnabhumi International Airport, Bangkok

R128, Sobek's family home (featured in Dwell's May 2003 issue), is a ground-breaking example of green design with zero energy consumption, emissions, and waste. For the Suvarnabhumi International Airport in Bangkok, designed by Murphy/Jahn Architects, Sobek created a patented membrane that allows natural light in but keeps heat and noise out.

R128

Photos by Ranier Viertlboeck (airport), Ronald Halbe (R128)



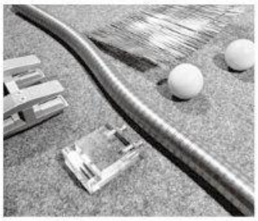
Werner Sobek's voice drops to a low, rhythmic pitch as he articulates each word, slightly exaggerating the alliteration. "His soul swooned slowly," intones the 55-year-old architect, "as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe." He pauses, glancing at the ceiling of the classroom in the basement of S. R. Crown Hall, Mies van der Rohe's glass-and-steel masterpiece that houses the Illinois Institute of Technology's architecture college, where Sobek currently holds the Mies teaching chair. He blinks. Then, eyes bright, hands flitting back and forth like an orchestra conductor's, Sobek concludes his on-the-spot recitation of James Joyce's last line in "The Dead." "And fain-tly fall-ing, like the descent of their last end...upon all the living and the dead."

Never mind that Sobek, who is German, can spontaneously quote any number of literary classics in other languages. ("Do you want more?" he asks, helpfully, when he finishes his favorite line of *Dubliners*. "I can recite plenty of others.") This architect-engineer, perhaps best known for the entirely recyclable house he built for his family near Stuttgart, is a true polymath. Equally at home in the cutting rooms of Milanese fashion houses ("If you ever want some advice on clothes, I can give it to you," he says, conversationally) and the production line at Mercedes-Benz, he also learned how to hike glaciers in Austria after being thwarted by the ice on an ascent in the Himalayas. He could read Turgenev forever, has a solid understanding of textile weaving, knows all about the use of titanium aluminum in superlight airplane construction, and spends two to three weeks a year motorcycling alone through Patagonia to clear his head.

It is precisely this omnivorous approach that has made his 200-person firm, with offices from Stuttgart to Khartoum, so good at sustainable design—though, he insists, environmental efficiency is not a goal in itself but simply a by-product of good building. "I do not want to talk about green, green, green, and so on," says Sobek, who nonetheless includes the information that SUVs are not welcome right beneath the RSVP line on invitations to his dinner parties. "Why use more energy or materials when you could use less? This is a self-understanding thing. It's as important as that the building does not fall down and that it is built on time."

Citing Buckminster Fuller's question of architects he met ("How much does your building weigh?"), Sobek calls for "radical engineering" to slim down today's structures. He defines it as leveraging the know-how of a wide range of specialists, from civil, structural, industrial, and machine engineers to chemists and couturiers in the building design process. The positive consequences of such an approach, he says, could be enormous. Modern advances in materials technology and manufacturing processes have opened up possibilities for entirely new kinds of buildings where, for example, a textile roof soaks up energy during the day and releases it at night; a glass house embedded with electrified liquid crystals grows opaque on demand; or a facade "breathes" without the need for windows. In the future, buildings will assume any shape you want; exert complete control over things like light, air flow, heating, and humidity; and do it all so efficiently that you might never have to pay a heating bill again. "Reduction equals refinement," he says. "Look at Porsche."

But Sobek is quick to add that all this is possible only if architects start working differently. "We



Sobek (left) and those in his office (above) believe in providing the link between high-level engineering and architecture. A better understanding of engineering, Sobek argues, will open up entirely new possibilities for architects' thinking.

have to establish a way of planning buildings that's integral," he says. "A lot of architects talk about new possibilities, but they can't apply them. For many architects, the world is still limited to concrete, masonry, wood, and steel."

The solution? "You must understand the materials, and that has to be interdisciplinary," Sobek says, adding that in order to explore what he calls the "terra incognita" that exists between highly specialized fields of knowledge, the old model of the architect as generalist and engineers and contractors as order-taking specialists must give way to a more equitable exchange between parties. To help his employees develop a common language, Sobek sends his engineers to Paris fashion shows and his architects to tour the Airbus factory. "It's so boring I don't even want to bring it up," he says, shrugging. "But it's the idea of a team."

Working alone and with star architects like Zaha Hadid and Jean Nouvel, Sobek's firm has designed bridges, high-rises, offices, airports, a tent for the Pope, automobile exposition structures, industrial design products, and, in the last decade, six private residences that take energy efficiency as seriously as aesthetics. The first of these, finished in 2000, was Sobek's own family home. The now-famous four-story glass house, dubbed, not unlike an Audi or BMW, the R128, operates according to what he calls the "triple-zero approach: zero energy consumption, zero emissions, and zero waste." One source of inspiration for both the house and the rest of Sobek's work was the German auto industry: Under German law, automakers must produce cars whose component parts are recyclable. "I thought, Why don't we have this in the building industry?"

With the German auto manufacturers' recycling mandate in mind, Sobek designed so as to render the building's high-quality materials reusable in the event the structure is ever torn down. Like German cars, the entire house is constructed using only two kinds of bolts and thus can be disassembled with just two kinds of wrenches. Drawing on an as-yet-unrealized proposition for Ford Motor Company that cars be put together with a special glue that dissolves when you dump the car in a vat of chemicals at the end of its life, he stuck his bathroom ceiling's wooden laminate to a sheet of aluminum with a very similar sort of adhesive.

Next, inspired by the load-bearing capacity of sports shoes, he Velcroed this paneling to the ceiling's steel rafters. "I call it ephemeral architecture," he says, acknowledging that growing up in postwar Germany, where many places still show the damage inflicted by the Second World War, shaped some of his ideas about architectural permanence. But accepting impermanence is not the same as embracing the "throw-away society" that, Sobek says, is antithetical to his basic philosophy. "Ephemeral architecture can go today or it can stand for 1,000 years. But if it goes, it can go with honor, even the day after the opening ceremony."

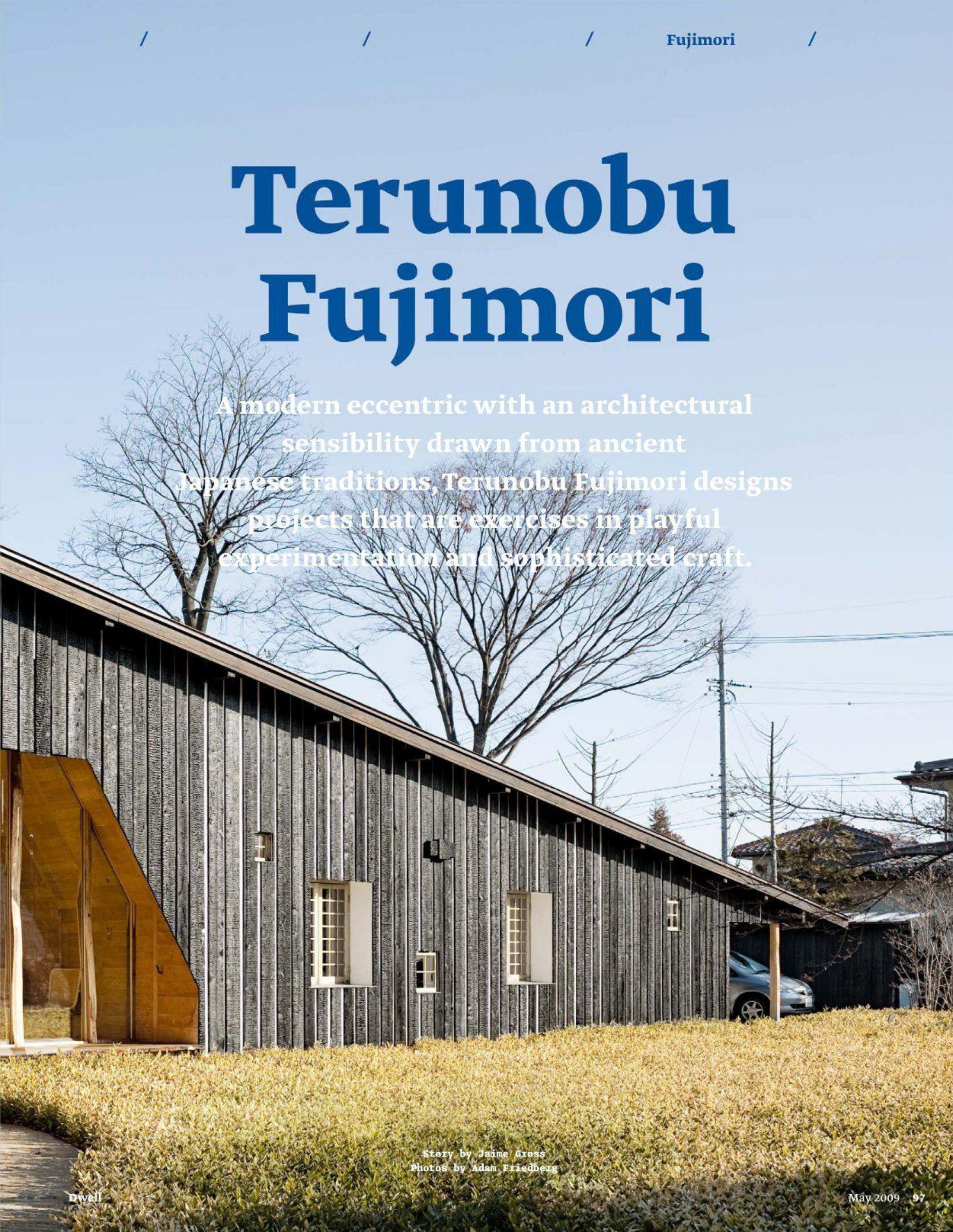
The five other triple-zero residences he has designed are all in Germany. A seventh is planned in France (only two have been published, due to the owners' reluctance to join the sustainable architecture tourism circuit). In these delicate, understated domiciles, whose spare, modern lines stand out against their natural surroundings without overwhelming or being overwhelmed by them, he has included innovations he would like to see implemented across the board in new construction. "Why are all the electrical elements still buried in the walls?" he wonders. "There are five layers of materials, and nobody will ever take that apart. The copper embedded there is gone forever." Energy-saving measures he has implemented include sensors that respond, when someone opens a window, by automatically turning off the heat.

Sobek thinks for a moment and traces his belief that "it is unethical to throw things away" to growing up in Aalen, a small town in southwestern Germany where he earned pocket money in high school by painting Jimi Hendrix in his death throes on the walls of local nightclubs, then read Nietzsche into the wee hours. "You are influenced by the spirit of the place where you grow up," he says. "The area is very, very poor in natural resources. Growing up in these surroundings, you treat everything carefully." Carefully, indeed, though as any good architect will note, care must be tempered with trial and error. At R128, for example, the magnets that held the bathroom mirrors to the wall so that, if the building is dismantled, they can be removed with a simple suction device, didn't work perfectly at first. "Of course there was a crash at three in the morning," Sobek says ruefully. Then he smiles. "But we fixed it."

Design is as important as any other element in Sobek's work. Structures like the Suvarnabhumi International Airport (top), the Altar Roof for Benedict XVI (middle), and the H16 house (bottom) can't just work well and function environmentally; they have to look good, too.

Photos by Rainer Viertlboeck (curved glass), Zooey Braun PHOTOGRAPHY (tent roof, glass house)

Yakisugi House (Charred Cedar House)



Terunobu Fujimori

A modern eccentric with an architectural sensibility drawn from ancient Japanese traditions, Terunobu Fujimori designs projects that are exercises in playful experimentation and sophisticated craft.

Story by Jaime Gross
Photos by Adam Friedberg

One of the first things you notice about the Japanese architect and architectural historian Terunobu Fujimori is his voracious appetite. His particular brand of hunger extends not only to food—which he devours swiftly and animatedly, crumbs flying Cookie Monster–style—but also to an ardent intellectual curiosity about the world, especially as it relates to architecture, his all-consuming passion for more than 30 years. A longtime professor at the Institute of Industrial Science at the University of Tokyo, Fujimori came to designing late—he got his first commission at age 44, 19 years ago—but he has since conceived some of Japan's most startlingly original buildings, on average one per year.

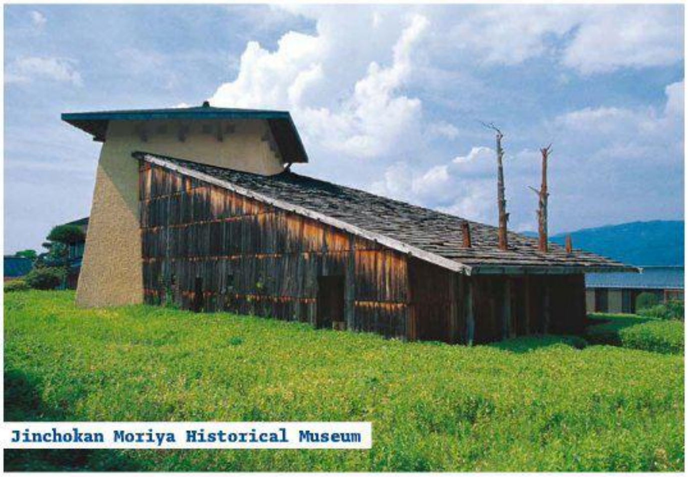
Leading the way to his office at the university (he calls it his "laboratory"), he walks swiftly and steadily, as if propelled on a Segway, his salt-and-pepper hair waving behind him. We sit at a table sipping green tea, and Fujimori thumbs through his sketchbook, discussing the atypical genesis of his career while gobbling tea cookies and sketching almost continuously with a blue pencil. Fujimori grew up in a tiny, rural village two hours south of Nagano, where he helped care for the surrounding forests, as the local villagers have done for more than 400 years. He studied architectural design in college but quickly became disillusioned by the lack of hands-on technical training—he was more interested in building than in design, he realizes now—and moved to Tokyo to pursue a PhD, spending the next 20 years as a scholar and professor of modern Japanese architectural history.

Fujimori basically fell into designing buildings after his native village commissioned him to design a small history museum for a local family with ancient ties to the area. As he pondered what form the building should take, he felt the weight of all of architectural history bearing down on him. "Since I was a famous architectural historian," he says, "I thought my architecture should be totally unique, dissimilar to any architecture that came before. I figured that if I did something traditionally European or Japanese, everyone would say 'Oh, it's because he's a historian.' I didn't want that criticism." But at the same time, he wanted to stay away from anything too contemporary. "Some of my closest friends, like Tadao Ando and Toyo Ito, were architects who were starting to get famous, and I didn't want them to laugh at me and say, 'Oh, you mimic my work.'"

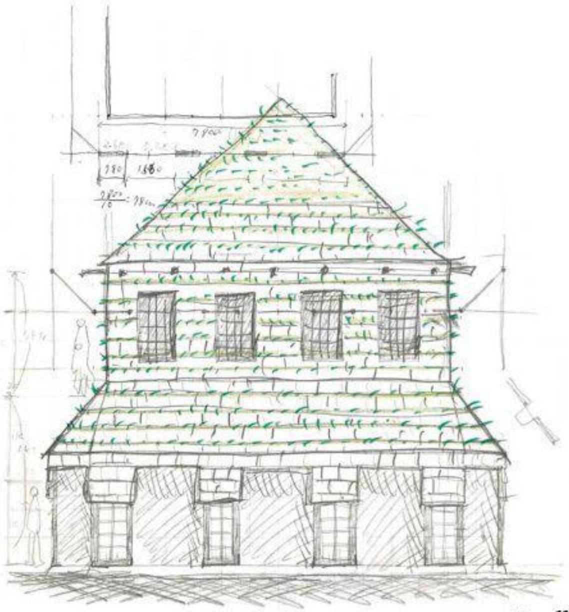
His peers found the building intriguing. "Terunobu Fujimori has thrown a punch of a kind no one has ever seen before at 'modernism,'" wrote the architect Kengo Kuma. Encouraged, Fujimori decided to continue designing. With no other clients in sight, he built a house for his family in a Tokyo suburb. Inspired by the plant-covered thatched roofs prevalent in Normandy, the Tanpopo (Dandelion) House has strips of volcanic rock affixed to the facade, with flowers and grass blooming in the grooves between them. The thick walls mean that the house is extremely well insulated and energy-efficient, a by-product of the design rather than a direct goal. While Fujimori admits that his buildings tend to be ecologically sensitive and extremely energy-efficient, he is wary of the contemporary conception of green design. "As an architect, I deal with the visual effects. Energy conservation is an engineer's work. My intention is to visibly and harmoniously connect two worlds—the built world that mankind creates with the nature God created."

Earlier that day we'd met in Kiyosumi, a town 60 miles north of Tokyo, to visit his most recent project: a 1,080-square-foot concept house he designed for the Tokyo Gas Company Ltd., Japan's largest natural gas provider. Coal House, as Fujimori calls it, uses exclusively gas-powered appliances and is full of quirky details: Squat, hobbit-scaled doors conceal ▸

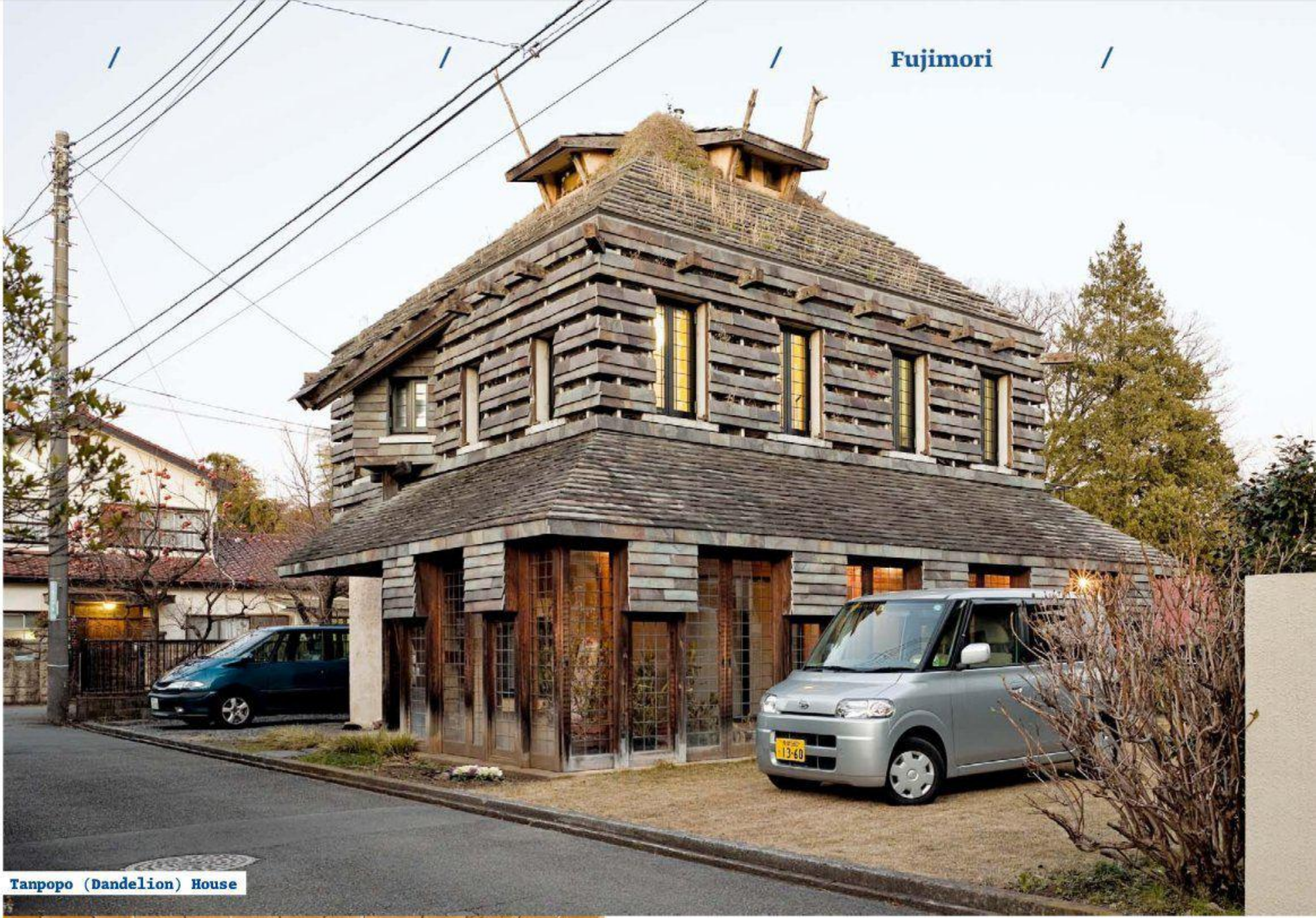
The 1991 Jinchokan Moriya Historical Museum (below left), Fujimori's first commissioned building, signaled the themes that continue to drive his work: design in harmony with nature; raw, natural materials (wood, mud-and-mortar walls); and a Neolithic-inspired architectural style. His next project, Tanpopo House (preliminary sketch, below right), introduced another obsession: houses with plants growing out of them.



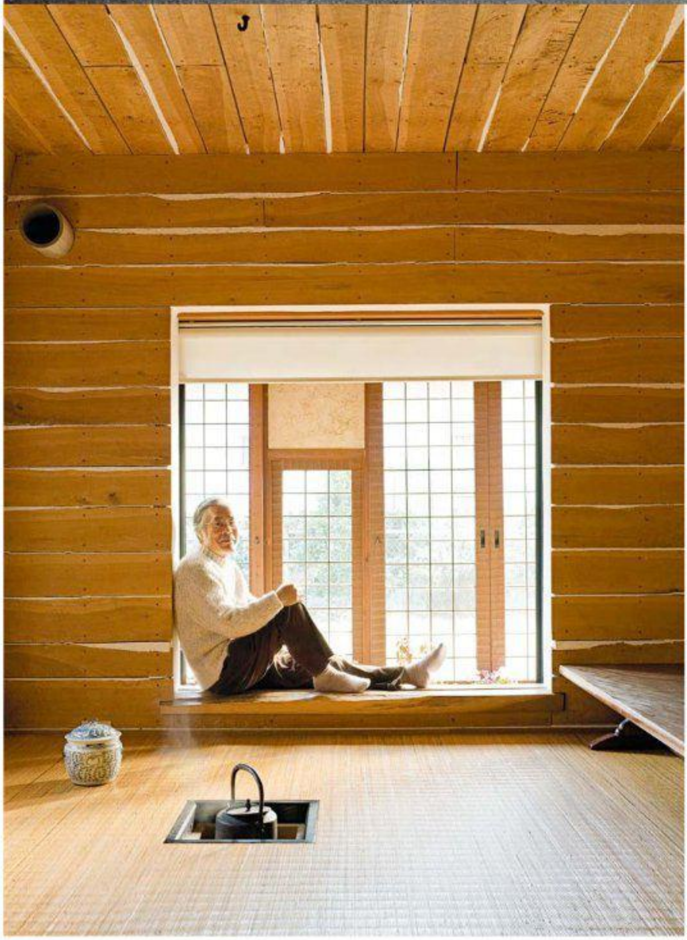
Jinchokan Moriya Historical Museum



Photos by Akihisa Masuda (museum, detail); Drawing by Fujimori



Tanpopo (Dandelion) House



Fujimori designed his own residence, the Tanpopo House (above), in 1995, with volcanic rock siding and grass and dandelions blooming on the roof and walls (below right); he is pleased by its "bushy-haired expression." The family's tearoom (below left) is an updated take on Japan's traditional flexible, open-plan tatami-mat room. Here, the charcoal fire pit for the teapot is an electric coil embedded in the floor, and the flooring is a durable rattan from Indonesia. Plaster oozing in between oak planks gives the room a warm, rough-hewn feel—a Fujimori signature.

In Fujimori's most recent project, Coal House (below), a tearoom protrudes from the second story, accessible from the exterior by a timber ladder that appears to pierce the roof and from the interior by a secret door in the master bedroom. The climb (right) is purposely precarious. Fujimori wants visitors to "be a little afraid" on their way up; it's "a device to make you feel and think differently in this space." Inside, the tiny tearoom with its low ceiling (above) is like an adult clubhouse, designed for intimate conversation over hot drinks.

Shin-ken (Coal House)

A craftsman demonstrates how to char cedar (above): He lights newspaper at the base of three planks, coaxes the fire up the boards, then douses them with water after seven minutes. The primitive but painstaking process is said to protect wood against rain, rot, and insects for 80 years. It also gives the exteriors a reptilian texture that's as striking as it is practical. Fujimori carves many of his architectural models out of wood (below).

a bathroom and side entrance (you literally need to duck to enter); the children's room is accessible only by a steep ladder ("It's okay," Fujimori reassures me when I inquire about late-night bathroom runs, "children are like monkeys"); and a tiny tearoom hangs off the second story like a jutting upper lip, echoing the silhouette of his earlier Charred Cedar House from 2007. Both projects are extraordinarily striking, thanks in large part to their exterior siding, charred cedar boards with a crackled, crocodile-like texture—an ancient Japanese technique that seals the wood against rain and rot but is seldom used by contemporary architects. This is in part because it's labor-intensive—it takes seven minutes to char three boards—and also because the method is considered primitive. "No educated architect would use this material," says Fujimori with pride, grinning broadly. The effect certainly makes an impression; as we chat in front of the Coal House, a neighbor walks by slowly, swiveling her head, her mouth visibly agape.

Little about the way Fujimori works is conventional. He doesn't have a firm per se but rather recruits promising graduate students to help him flesh out the details of each project after he's done all the drawing. He makes his architectural models by hacking tree stumps into abstract, sculptural shapes using a chainsaw. Galleries abroad have offered to buy them, but he refuses. And when he's completed the final drawings for a project, he invites his clients to his weekend house in Nagano for a little ceremony he's devised. Sitting in his private Too-High Tea House, perched 20 feet in the air and wavering on two forked tree trunks, he hands them a hand-rendered version of the final plans. "If they don't like my design, I shake the building!" he says, laughing heartily.

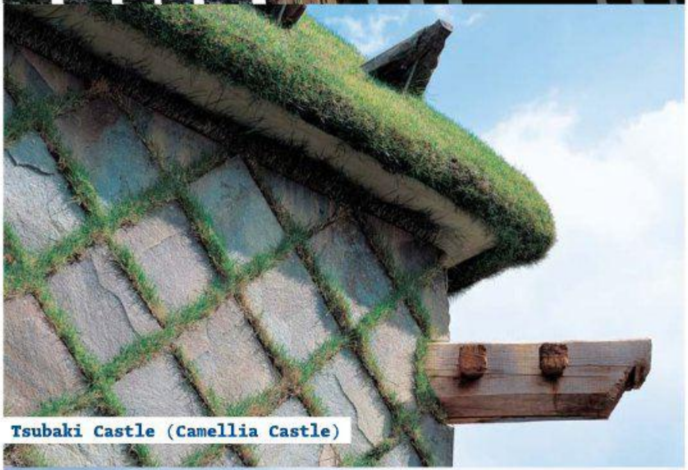
Fujimori hires professionals to do all the structural and electrical work on his buildings but handles many of the interior finish details himself, with a motley group of volunteers that he calls the Jomon Company—so named for the Neolithic period of Japanese history and for the primitive tools they use to give Fujimori's interiors a warm, roughed-up feel. When the structure is nearly complete, this loose collective of close friends—a painter, a novelist, a book publisher, a sake brewer, a priest—gather to do whatever unusual task Fujimori has set aside for them: planting hundreds of leeks in individual pots atop a gabled roof; weaving a bamboo screen for a copper-plated pottery studio; or cutting irregular chunks of wood with stone-carving tools and embedding them in a tea house's vaulted ceiling. "Instead of playing golf that weekend, they work," says Fujimori, hastening to add, "I never pay them. If you pay, it's labor!"

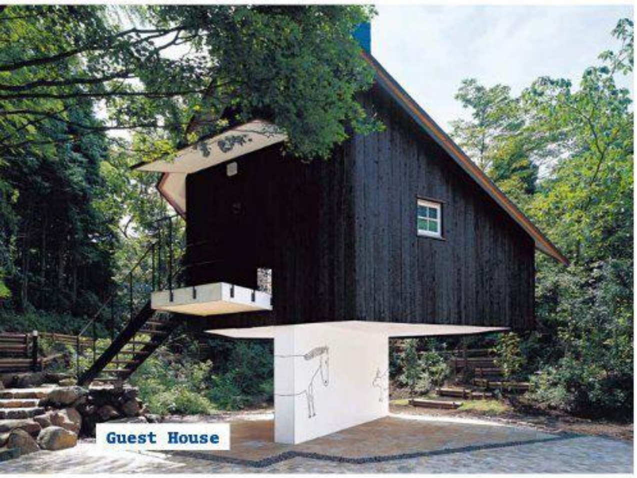
Fujimori clearly relishes his iconoclast role, even as he receives increasing recognition and respect as a designer: At the 2006 Venice Biennale he exhibited his unconventional architectural models, and in 2007 the Japanese publishing company Toto released a monograph of his work. But increasing fame and more prestigious commissions don't mean he'll change his unconventional working methods anytime soon. He's spent the past several years roaming the globe for new ideas, applying his historian's mind to collect inspiration from ancient models: mud architecture in Mali, adobe buildings in the American West, and the famous Caves of Lascaux in southwest France. These spare, stripped-down structures remind us that we all share primal instincts that can be aroused and satisfied through design: for shelter, warmth, and community. Fujimori may dismiss sustainability as a side note in his buildings, but his modern interpretation of the Neolithic captures a truth too often lost in our scramble for eco-credibility: Working with nature is sometimes the most radically green approach an architect can take. ▮

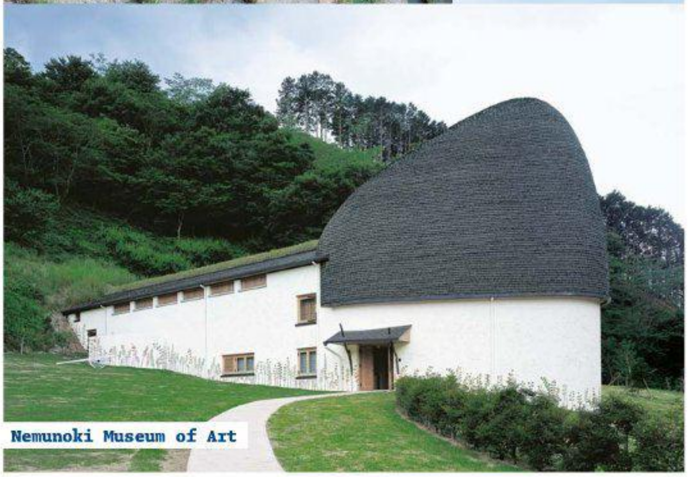
Lamune Onsen (Lamune Hot Spring House)

A sampling of Fujimori's work reveals his playful, organic approach. Clockwise from above: a hot-springs spa capped with two pine trees; a sake brewery clad in a grass-and-stone checkerboard; a humpbacked children's museum that resembles "a mammoth"; and a guesthouse clad in charred cedar that appears to balance on a sliver of a wall.

His coup de grace, however, is his retreat in Nagano (opposite): The Too-High Tea House, with a roof of hand-rolled copper sheets, seems precariously perched atop a pair of tree trunks 20 feet in the sky. Why two? "One leg is dangerous and three legs are too stable and boring."


Tsubaki Castle (Camellia Castle)


Guest House


Nemunoki Museum of Art

Photos by Akihisa Masuda (Lamune Onsen, Guest House, Tsubaki Castle, Nemunoki Museum)

Takasugi-an (Too-High Tea House)

At Home in the Zone

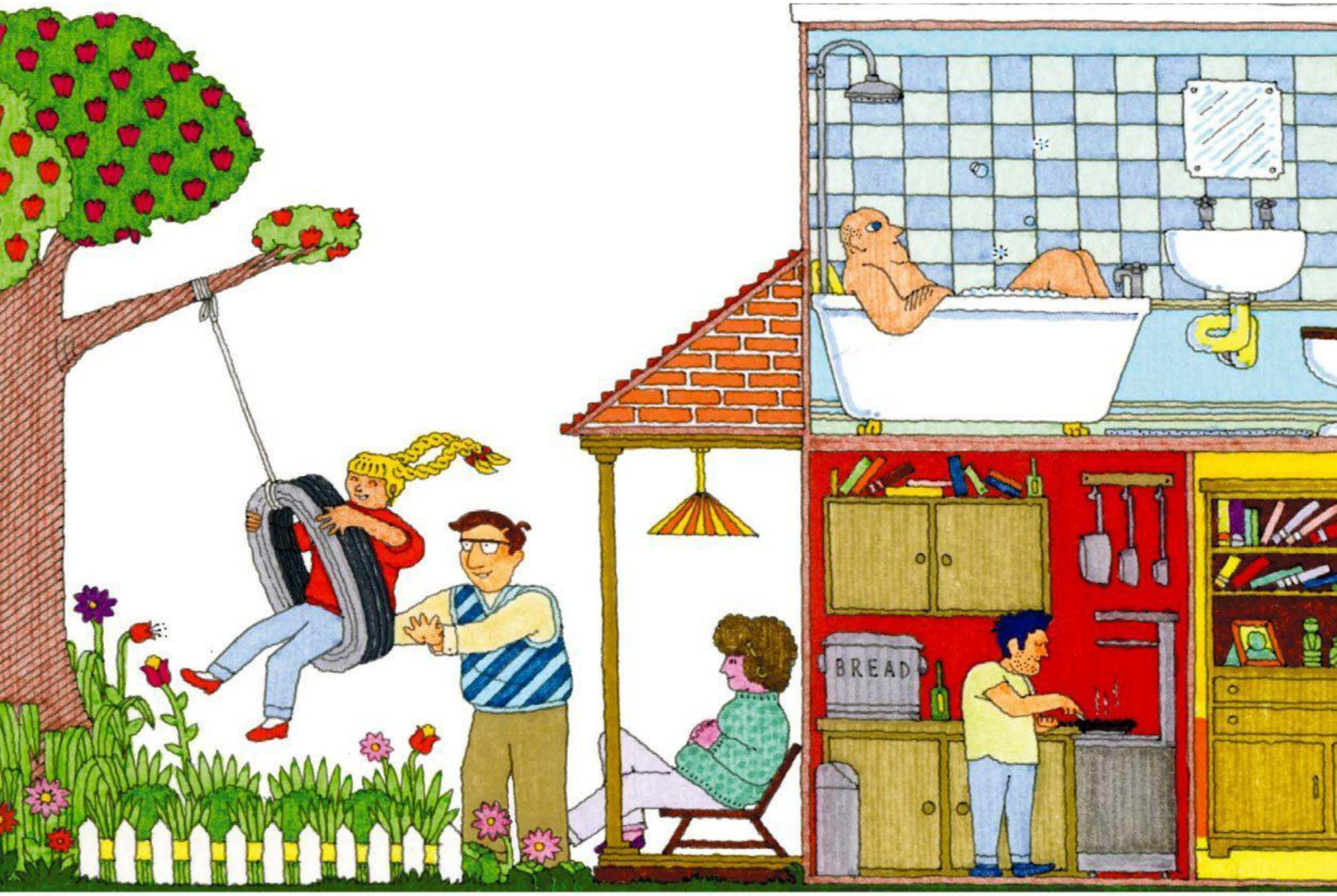
Sustainability doesn't have to mean monasticism and darkness—with this zone-by-zone guide to the domestic world you know best, going green can be both more efficient and fun.

Story by Dan Maginn
Illustrations by Jim Stoten

Life was much harder when humans lived in caves. Consider a typical Sunday dinner: First we'd have to go out and whack a mammoth; then we'd have to invent a wheel to schlep the mammoth back to the cave; then we'd have to collect sticks and dung and figure out a way for the whole mess to catch fire. If all went well, we'd finally be able to fry up a chop or two before night fell and the jackals attacked.[1]

We can't know for sure, but I imagine all this work made us grumpy.

Fast-forward a few millennia. We're still around (a little taller, a bit less furry), and we still get cold and hungry, but times have changed. Now, if we're cold we turn a knob on the wall and warm air blows out. If we're hungry we order food and a delivery



human shuttles it to our door with her blue Pontiac LeMans. While effortlessly obtained warm air and Buffalo chicken pizzas might mark progress of a sort, our pursuit of the easy life has created some serious environmental problems that have the potential to make us pine for the days of cave dwellers and mammoths.

We can do better. Luckily, evolution has seen to it that humans have the ability to define and solve problems, should we choose to do so. By decommissioning our modern-day caves as energy-sucking pleasure boxes and recommissioning them as efficient instruments of shelter, we can more directly control their impact on our communities and on the planet. With an understanding of the issues at stake, we must use our opposable thumbs and sizable brains to retool our homes—and redesign our behavior within them.

Although some of the steps we can take are small and highly implementable, others are much greater. Some require the purchase of nifty gadgets and others require relatively intensive, nonglamorous behavioral changes. If we really want to make a difference, the challenge is to design[2] an effective, personalized strategy—one that balances our desire to live sustainably with a desire to live comfortably.

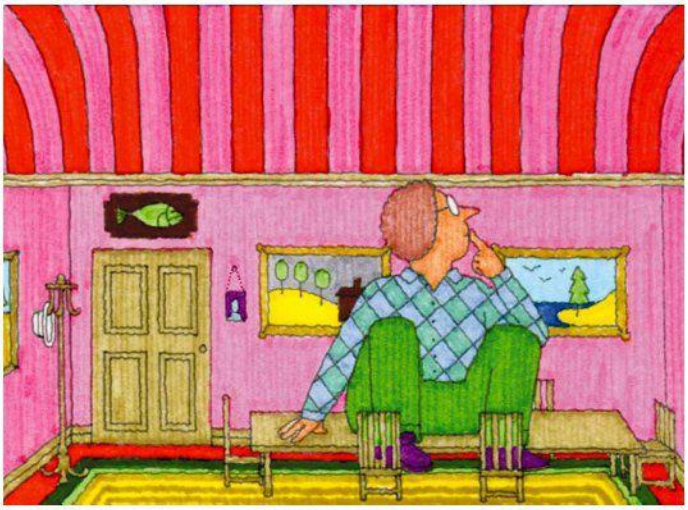
We'll begin by taking a look at "whole house" ideas that can quickly reduce our resource usage across the board, then we'll zero in on more localized home zones.

1) Admittedly, my understanding of prehistoric life comes solely from *The Flintstones* and a hazily remembered story from a 1973 issue of *Highlights* magazine.

2) Yes, design. We're going to use that word a lot in this discussion.

The Whole House Zone

By conceptually dividing your home into zones, you can analyze each of its functions in turn. From there, you can develop strategies to understand how you actually live inside these zones—and what it takes to improve their performance. That said, there are a number of fundamental whole-house strategies that apply to every zone in the home. These are the biggies: Implement them and you'll reduce your energy usage (and your energy bills) dramatically.



Get an energy audit.
A properly executed audit[1] will pinpoint your energy-loss flaws. The prime culprits tend to be underinsulation, duct leakage, and outdoor air infiltration. In addition to having an efficient, properly functioning heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) system, fixing these deficiencies is often the most effective way to reduce your resource consumption.

Get with the program.
Having an efficient HVAC system is smart.[2] Not having a programmable thermostat to properly utilize said HVAC system is dumb.[3]

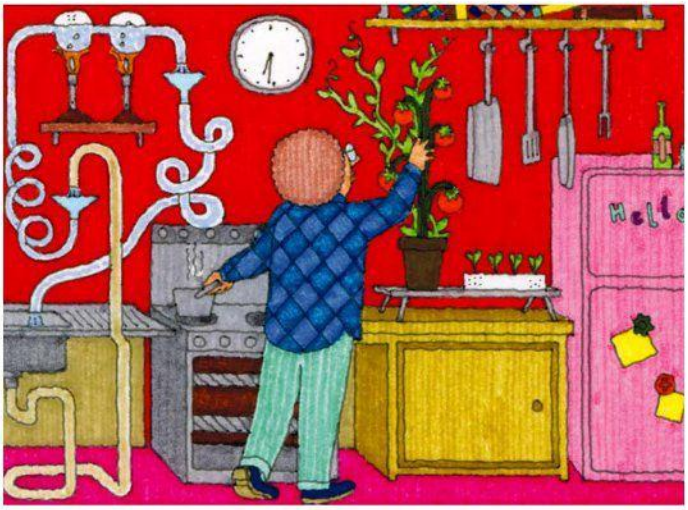
Ventilate.
Make every effort to utilize your HVAC system only as a last resort. Open windows to create cross ventilation and supplement the effect with fans.

Shun the sun.
Unwanted solar gain in hot months results in unwanted increases in energy bills. Exterior awnings and indoor window treatments can add to the design of your home while blocking rays.

1) Be careful, grasshopper. There are very good companies out there doing energy audits—and there are eco-shysters doing what look like energy audits. You would be wise to know the difference. Do some basic detective work: Review references, a completed sample audit, and a copy of a standard contract before you commit to a provider. Do the easy fixes yourself, and hire a contractor for the tricky ones. If the auditor suggests that they be retained to perform the improvements, consider getting a competitive bid on the work.
2) If your HVAC system is more than ten years old, chances are it's sucking dollars out of your pocket and shooting carbon into the atmosphere. Look into a new Energy Star–rated system.
3) For about 50 bucks (plus installation) you can get a basic model, and then you can synchronize your HVAC's operation to your weekly schedule.

The Food Zone

Fine-tuning your cooking and dining areas pays off in more ways than just saving resources. As in other functional zones, their success starts with awareness: Where exactly does your food come from? Where exactly does your trash go after you haul it to the curb? Playing an active role in your family's food cycle can be eye-opening, and it often helps spark an interest in improving other house zones.



Get cooking.
Embrace your inner caveman and avoid delivery pizza: Make a true effort to engage in the process of preparing and eating meals. Leave your car in the garage and cook seasonally[1] and simply at home. Buy locally—and buy in bulk, if possible, to help eliminate packaging waste.

Recycle.
As a goal, limit yourself to one trash bag a week for your household.[2] Between comprehensive recycling and composting, you can get there.

Retool.
Take a hard look at your kitchen. If your appliances are over the hill, replace them with Energy Star appliances.[3]

Still drinking bottled water?
Shame on you, Earth-hater. Install an undersink or faucet-mounted water filtration system and drink up. ⊪

1) Avoid roasting a pig in August, for instance.
2) While we're talking about bags, be sure to get reusable shopping bags. When a cashier asks if you want paper or plastic, look at them quizzically.
3) And, by the way, do you really need an in-sink garbage disposal? Really? Even the word sounds unsustainable. Try composting the food waste instead.

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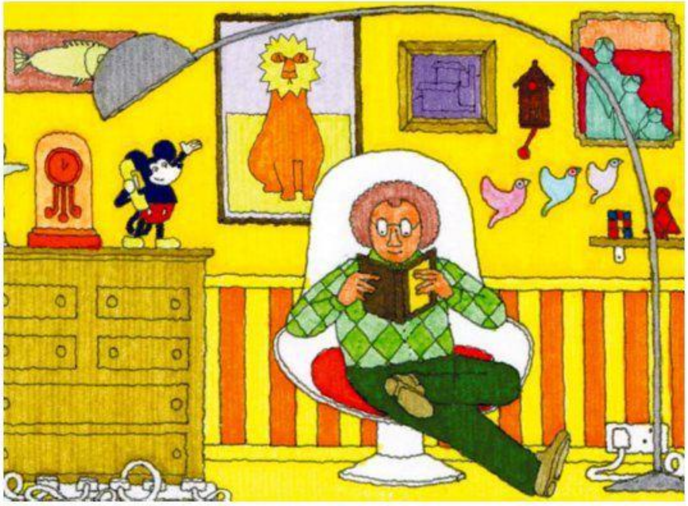
The Living Zone

Let's talk design for a minute. It's important to remember that potential modifications to your home must be carefully considered before you implement them. If you blindly follow the prescriptions of a well-meaning energy wonk without understanding the experiential implications of his suggestions, you could wind up with a perfectly energy-efficient house that's perfectly uninspiring. Know this: Sustainable design doesn't have to suck.[1]



Light right.
For starters, replace nearly all[2] of your incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs).

New to you.
Using preowned furniture in your home capitalizes on embodied energy. It doesn't need to be a mid-century-modern classic; antemillennial curiosities also have their place.

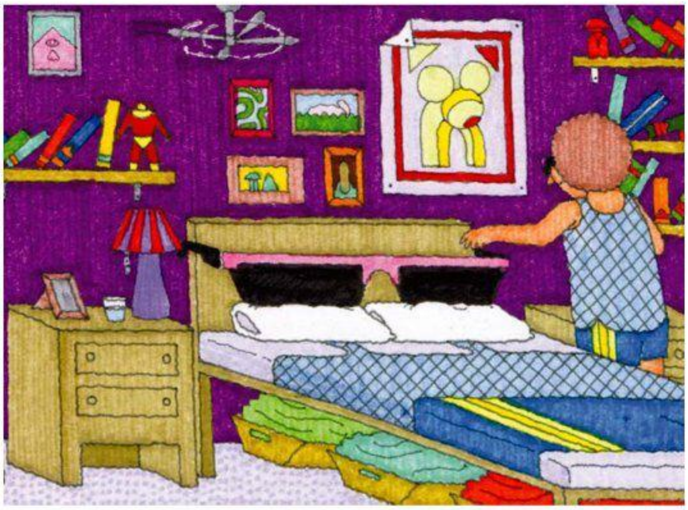
Clean green.
So you feel dazed and confused after wiping down your new (old) Paul McCobb table? That's not good. Research nontoxic cleaning materials and use them.

Beware the phantom load.
Off is the new On. Figure out a clever way to plug your small appliances and electronic gear into power strips, and then turn them off when you leave the house each day. Consider the constantly flashing "12:00 a.m." on your coffeemaker as a badge of honor.

1) On the contrary: A well-designed home that recognizes and responds to the unique characteristics of its site—its orientation, geography, and climatic patterns—is inherently sustainable.
2) Why not replace them all? Well, if the flexibility to adapt your light levels in a few places is critical, it might make sense to stick with a dimmable incandescent in those places for the time being—at least until dimmable CFLs or LEDs become more affordable. Theory being: It's better to use a wee bit more energy and actually use the space than it is to use a wee bit less energy and not use the space because it's too bright. Another option: Go with all CFLs and spark up a candle when the mood hits.

The Sleeping Zone

Sleep on this: You probably spend more time in your bedroom than any other home zone, so it's important to get it right.[1] Reducing your resource consumption here requires a close look at how you use the space—night and day.[2] Your goal is to balance energy efficiency with flexibility of experience.



Fine-tune your window shades.[3]
Your shades should have the flexibility to provide all the privacy you need while allowing you to keep the lights off during the day. A flexible combination of opaque and translucent materials usually does the trick. In addition, keeping unwanted solar radiation from entering your space in the first place means lower cooling bills.

Get a good ceiling fan.
You get a lot of bang for your energy buck with an efficient ceiling fan. Install one with multiple speeds so that you can moderate air movement.[4]

Get the TV out.
What are you watching TV in bed for? Among other things, the bedroom should provide you with a calming foundation to support your hectic day. Police shoot-'em-ups and Flowbee infomercials have no place here. Unless watching late-night Animal Planet is instrumental in your decompression cycle, consider popping that thing off the wall and donating it to an affordable housing organization. ▸

1) Granted, you're asleep most of the time. But still.
2) And season to season! Dress your bed like you'd dress yourself. If your region has four seasons, your bed should have four specific outfits. Properly prepared, you can tweak the thermostat an additional few degrees in the extreme months and use natural ventilation in the swing months. Tangential idea: Use your pets for heat. You feed them and collect their poop. Use them as living blankets. They owe you this much.
3) You might need to chat with a design professional about this. There are many strategies for balancing privacy and daylight.
4) Bonus feature: Fans make calm, sleep-inducing sounds.

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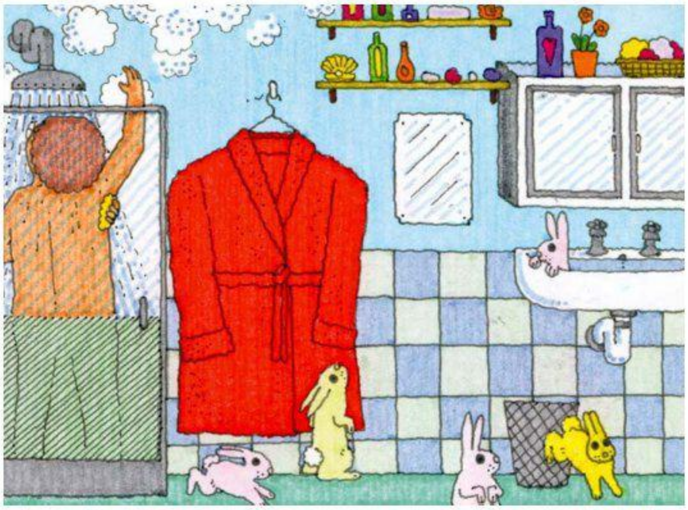
The Bathroom Zone

Reducing your water usage is easy, and it doesn't mean you have to brush your teeth with a pinecone or weep with remorse every time you flush the can. As is the case with all resource usage, responsibility starts with understanding how much of something is actually needed to get the job done. Until you take that step, you're basing your behavior on assumptions and habits you learned as a kid.[1]



Use dual-flush toilets.[2]
Install them. Use them. Hit the right button.

Go low-flow.
Low-flow showerheads and faucets squirt sufficient amounts of water at you. Get in the way of the reduced squirt at the right moment, do your thing, and turn the water off. Easy.[3]

Purchase a PHID (portable humanoid insulation device).
It's hard to exit a hot shower on a cold day. Buy a great robe and hop out of the shower a minute earlier.

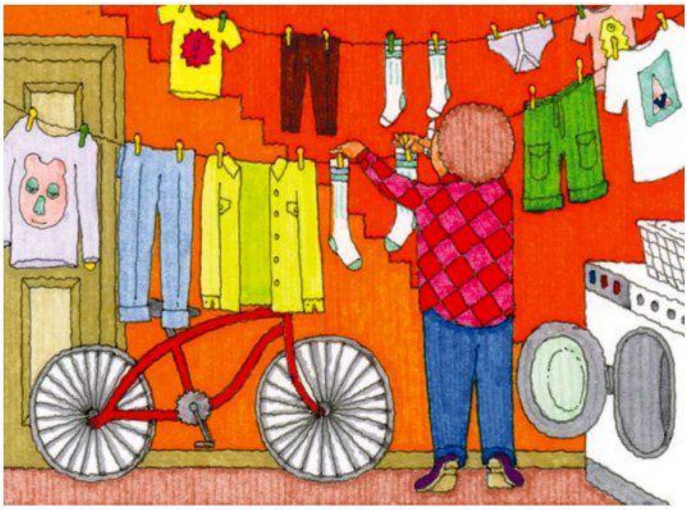
Buy natural. Buy bulk. Use less.
Consider all the products you use in the bathroom: cleaning products, cosmetics, other stuff. Think of all the packaging. Think of all the chemicals. Think of all the bunnies. Act accordingly.

Consider solar hot water.
Either install a fancy black outdoor water bag for plein-air showering or spend some dough on a roof-mounted solar water heater.

1) Many of us don't treat bathrooms as functional zones—we treat them as playgrounds. We splash around in overlong showers. We let the water run as we brush our teeth. We leave the ventilation fan running long after incriminating odors have vanished. Wheeeeeee!
2) You've seen these, right? Two buttons on the top of the tank? #1 and #2? Get it?
3) No bucks to go low-flow? At the very least, install a $5 aerator on your faucet—it will do the trick.

The Utility Zone

Your garage, laundry room, basement, and other nonglam support areas: These are the silent killers of energy-efficiency in your home.[1] Because these spaces are largely "unseen" (and because they're where spiders look up at us with their tiny, frightening eyes), we tend to look the other way and ignore their negative impact on our efforts. Spiders or no spiders, we can no longer afford this attitude.



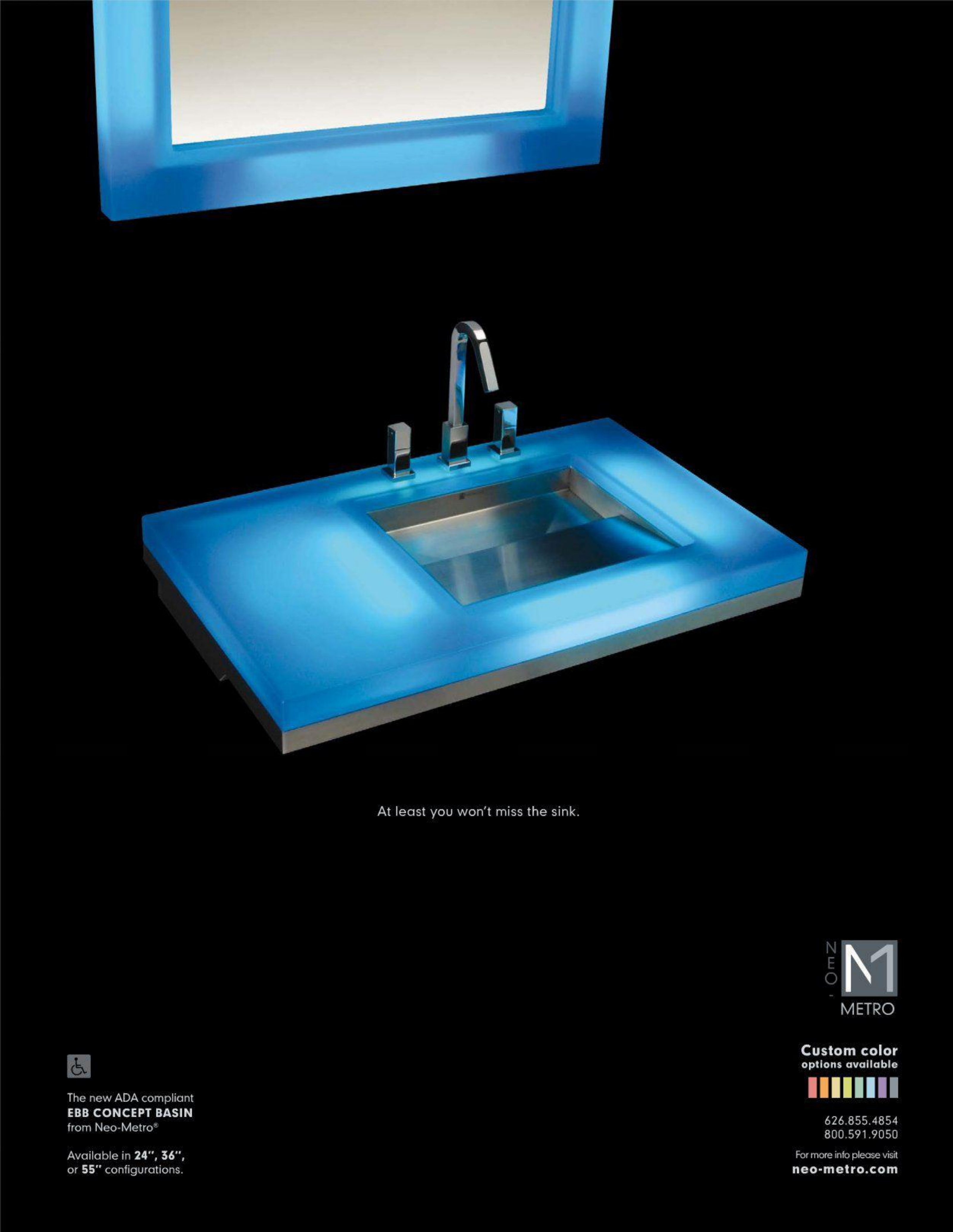
No second fridge. It's the enemy.
Get rid of that thing, buzzing away down there in the basement. It costs more to operate than you realize. Besides, you have way too much of whatever the hell you have in it anyway. Just say no.

Slip into something more ecological.
You can make a big impact on your energy and water consumption simply by modifying your laundry practices. Stay away from partial loads. Use cold water only. Get retro and line dry if you have the basement or yard space.[2]

Clean your garage.
You've sold your second car, right? Good for you. Now you have a free bay in your garage! Park your bikes there and give yourself some room to maintain and store them.

Park your energy-wasting ways.
You really don't need to heat and cool your garage. So stop it, okay?[3] ▶

1) If you elect to have an energy audit performed on your house, you might be surprised to see how much attention is paid to these rooms.
2) Allow your kid the joys of slipping through freshly laundered, air-dried sheets on a spring morning. Ahhhhh…
3) Unless you live in St. Cloud, Minnesota, or something. Maybe. Even then, dial it back.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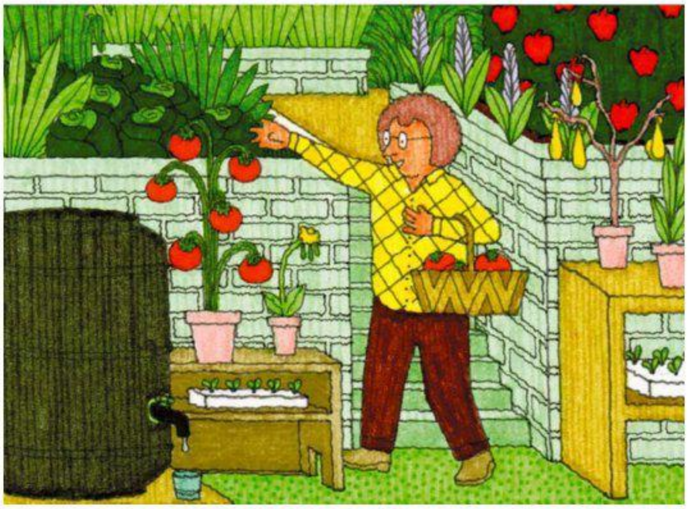
The Yard Zone

The space outside your walls should be as thoughtfully considered as the space within. Aside from contributing to pleasant, functioning outdoor space, well-placed landscaping can protect your house from solar gain in the summer while letting it inside during the winter.



Perform a yard audit.
Talk to a landscape architect who is versed in your region's native species.[1]

Install SmartPlants.
After you give turf grass and any other resource-sucking plants the boot,[2] plant low-maintenance perennials. Consider a purposeful schmear of Arboreal Shading Devices, Sylvanic Carbon Vacuums, and Solar-Powered Humanoid Food-Generation Stations.[3]

De-water.
Your nifty new native yardscape will require far less watering than whatever was there before. Continue the love by reducing your impact on your community's storm sewer system: Plant a rain garden and collect rain in a barrel.

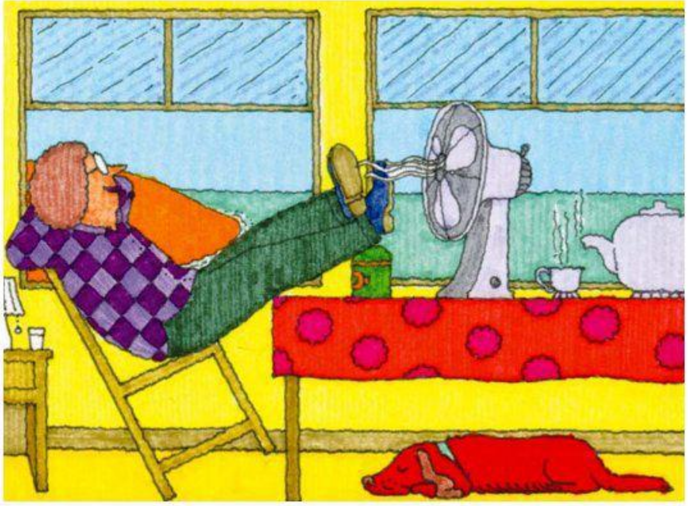
Get dirty.
Maintain your existing dirt by mulching, and create new dirt by composting your kitchen and yard waste.

Get lit.
Install a motion-control sensor or timer on your exterior lights—or use a solar-powered light.

1) Beware the tendency to play Weekend Warrior on this: If you're serious about reducing your impact on the environment, you've got to get it right.
2) Remember: Every time you run the mower, it's like leaving grungy carbon footprints all over your nice Prius. Eliminate as much turf grass as possible, and take care of what's left with an old-school manual mower. Whip that thing around the yard and drink a cold eco-Schlitz when you're done.
3) You know—trees, shrubs, vegetables. And maybe some nice purple coneflowers, too.

The Human Zone

The final home zone recognizes the importance of our behavior. Living responsibly extends beyond our physical spaces into our daily actions. We must design[1] the way we live as carefully as we design our rain gardens and ground-source heat pumps. In the end, we must fine-tune ourselves to become active participants in the operation of our homes.



Install SmartThoughts.
If you truly want to reduce your impact, you're going to have to upgrade your own operational software. Use your cranial mass to understand the delta between the resources you're consuming now and what you actually need in order to live well.

Live small.
Size matters when it comes to home efficiency. If you're building new, build small. If you're renovating, renovate small. If you're not building or renovating, then just live small. Or move.

Buy a calendar.[2]
Map out the maintenance actions you will need to respond to seasonal changes. It takes time to batten down the hatches, and it's easy to be overwhelmed, but plan ahead and execute your steps one project at a time.[3]

Shape up.
Expand your comfort boundaries a notch or two[4] by tweaking your thermostat a few degrees. Self-insulate or self-ventilate as required.[5]

1) Yes, design.
2) Really. An old-school calendar, up on the wall in the kitchen. Slap it onto your Energy Star fridge with a cool magnet.
3) Why not start living more responsibly right now? List five improvements or actions you think you can actually achieve and commit to them. Be slightly proud of yourself when they become part of your newly designed lifestyle. Then pick five more.
4) Grandma and Grandpa didn't have all this fancy conditioned air when they were growing up. You think you're better than Grandma and Grandpa? Huh?
5) In other words, wear a sweater when it's cold and peel it off when it gets warm. Keep peeling when it gets hot.

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Branching Out

Paul Donald believes change happens in the marketplace—and in the early 1990s, the former magazine designer was in the market for sustainable high design. After discovering a dearth of stores in which he could consciously consume, Donald founded Branch, an online purveyor of modern eco-friendly products, in 2005.

What's best about your job?
Being involved in the creation and distribution of thoughtful products.

What makes you wish you did something else?
Running the business side. It's a natural part of being a small-business owner, but my real love is design and working with designers.

Is there an object that changed how you think about design?
The book *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things* by William McDonough. It made me look at design in a much more holistic way. I would credit that as much as anything for my interest in starting Branch.

What's your prized possession?
My collection of original artwork. It's hard to pick a single one, but if pressed, I'd choose one of my pieces by Chris Johanson or Michael Bartalos.

Is there anything you are embarrassed to love?
The Millennium towels we carry at Branch. Don't get me wrong, they're great. It's just that I'm embarrassed, partly as a guy, to admit that I'm so into my bath towels.

What's your most recent purchase?
The AUM reclaimed-sailcloth bags we sell. People have a constant need for toting things around. They're great for throwing in the truck for a weekend getaway or going to the beach.

What are you currently longing for?
The perfect sofa: modern, simple, comfortable, beautiful, and sustainable. If I didn't have the sustainability constraint it would be a lot easier, but even saying that, it's just really tough to find the right sofa.

How do you define "good design"?
Design that solves a problem. At Branch, that means a product that fulfills its intended function—with the additional onus of being made in a way that doesn't create more problems for the planet.

What are your criteria for selecting an item to sell?
Our unofficial motto is "Design first, sustainability always." If I wouldn't have it in my own home, it doesn't go in the store—no matter how ecologically sound the materials, manufacturing, and labor practices are.

What's next for Branch?
Producing our own products. We have loads of ideas that we'd love to manufacture. It'd be great to have a storefront at some point, too.

> **"Our motto is 'Design first, sustainability always.' If I wouldn't have it in my own home, it doesn't go in the store—no matter how ecologically sound it is."**

1

2

3

4

Story by Miyoko Ohtake
Portrait by Melissa Kaseman

1. Coolade pitcher and glasses by Andi Kovel for Esque
2. Millennium towels by Bonjour
3. AUM tote by Stuart Sproule and Barnaby Killam for Red Flag Design
4. Cain Collection chair by Seth Eshelman for Staach Available at branchhome.com

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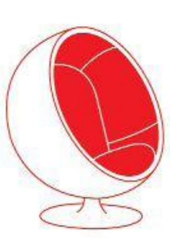
B

Put a B in your bonnet as we define the must-knows of a modernist's vocab to make your ABCs as easy as 1-2-3.

B series furniture

Inspired by the lightness and strength of a bicycle frame and the rectilinear geometry heralded by the early-1900s De Stijl movement, architect and designer Marcel Breuer's B series offered some of the world's first tubular steel furnishings. The most famous of the series, the B3 and B64 chairs, are more commonly known by their nicknames: the Wassily (for fellow Bauhaus professor Wassily Kandinsky) and Cesca (after Breuer's daughter, Francesca).



Ball chair

Finnish designer and fantastic-plastic pioneer Eero Aarnio spun heads when his spherical, swivel-base Ball chair made its debut in 1966 at the Asko booth during Cologne's International Furniture Fair. Inspired by laminates for boats and planes, Aarnio's sliced sphere has become an icon of space-age pop design with starring roles in *The Prisoner* and *Dazed and Confused*.

Luis Barragán (1902–1988)

Luis Barragán, a self-taught architect, was known for his intrepid use of color and integration of indoor and outdoor spaces. His work was described as poetic, as was his Pritzker Prize acceptance speech, where he apologized for not having done justice to the concepts of beauty, inspiration, magic, spellbound, enchantment, serenity, silence, intimacy, and amazement.

Beaux-Arts

Named after the prestigious École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, this neoclassical 19th-century architecture movement was the prominent design style for monumental public buildings during the early 1900s—such as McKim, Mead, and White's lavish Penn Station. Modernists, however, viewed the style as over-ornamented and backward-looking. The students agreed—and the École stopped teaching architecture in 1968 after strikes and studio sit-ins.

Harry Bertoia (1915–1978)

Italian-born American sculptor Harry Bertoia is best known for his eponymous collection of woven-wire seating for Knoll, including the Diamond and Bird chairs. Despite a scandal over creative rights between Bertoia and Charles and Ray Eames, with whom Bertoia worked in the 1940s, the line continues to leave its mark on the design world—and waffle patterns on the backs of those who grace the seats.

BIM

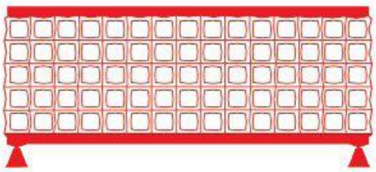
Building information modeling, or BIM, integrates nongraphical data—such as material properties, costs, and suppliers—into virtual databases that allow design teams to run performance and behavioral analyses (like how to maximize solar gain or decrease building waste) in order to make the best choices early and save extra work later.

Andrea Branzi (b. 1938)

Andrea Branzi once described himself as someone who saw "architecture not as the art of building but as a much more articulated form of thought." Given that Branzi's ideas ranged from how cities could be endless to how sofas could be considered household pets, it's no wonder this cofounder of both Archizoom and Domus Academy gained recognition as a radical.

Brutalism

Although the word "brutalism" harks back to Le Corbusier's use of raw concrete, *béton brut*, in the 1930s, it wasn't until the 1950s and '60s that the style, characterized by unadorned concrete and blunt detailing, took hold as a movement, adorning college campuses and civic centers the world over. Much maligned today, the beauty of brutalism depends on the beholder.



Gordon Bunshaft (1909–1990)

MIT-educated architect and International Style acolyte Gordon Bunshaft brought modernism to corporate America when in 1952 he designed the Lever House, a 24-story glass-clad office building, in New York City. A career-long architect at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Bunshaft was also responsible for one of the most sensitive and beautiful modern buildings ever built, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University.

Burnham & Root

Though today's high-rises plan to soar past the kilometer mark, in the late 1800s, anything taller than a few floors represented the emerging American form: the skyscraper. In 1882, Daniel Burnham and John Root, a duo of draftsmen-turned-architects, scraped the sky with the ten-story Montauk building in Chicago, made possible by the advent of reinforced concrete.

Compiled by Miyoko Ohtake

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An Introduction to Kitchen Design

The kitchen has evolved from a closed-off satellite to the most open, doted-upon room in the house—and repository of our dreams of domestic fulfillment.

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Photos by Bettman/CORBIS (fig. 4), Arthur Siegel/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images (fig. 5), Courtesy Jane McDevitt (fig. 2), Bulthaup Corporation (fig. 1), V&A Images/Victoria and Albert Museum, London (fig. 3)

Story by Deborah Bishop

Kitchen Design in Your Daily Life:
Learn the facts and explore the history of the most beloved and hard-wearing room in the house.

Fig. 6

Fig. 7

Photos courtesy Historical Picture Archive/CORBIS (fig. 6), Arclinea (fig. 7)

Fig. 1 The Bulthaup b2 brings the woodshop into the kitchen with utilitarian workspaces and pristine, orderly wooden cabinet systems. Fig. 2 A 1950s illustrated advertisement for the Morphy Richards Astral refrigerator. Fig. 3 The Frankfurt kitchen, designed by Austrian architect Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky, was one of the first kitchens designed as a complete and efficient system. Fig. 4 A display from the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959, depicting a woman in the "Miracle Kitchen," where automation has reduced her domestic workload. Fig. 5 The kitchen in a Frank Lloyd Wright-designed prefab house. Fig. 6 An engraving from 1675 by Justus Sadeler, showing the chaotic preparations in the kitchen before a feast. Fig. 7 Arclinea's Lignum and Lapis kitchen system features green materials, professional-grade appliances, and advanced technology like a miniature greenhouse for growing herbs indoors and a retractable glass hood over the cooktop.

In 1953, *House & Home* magazine crowed, "The kitchen is losing one of its four walls." Ensuing decades have unleashed a regular Jericho, to the point where I have a hard time recalling a custom-built house whose kitchen is not integrated into the living area, its walk-around island the Corian (or stainless, or marble) Mecca of family and friends.

Growing up, I didn't know anyone with a great room. Our mothers disappeared into smallish, constrained spaces—fitted cabinetry above, linoleum underfoot, appliances cheek-to-jowl on the counter—and emerged sometime later to announce "Dinner!" (Multiple times, with increasing decibel levels.) Today, the kitchen holds such allure, I have to browbeat guests to move down to the sofa after dinner.

As early as the 1930s, Frank Lloyd Wright dubbed the kitchen the "workroom" of the house, and created airy, open-plan designs for House Willey and House Jacobs. The rest of the country caught up about 50 years later, just as women were fleeing hearth and home for the workplace. The larger living area encouraged quality family time, while the perfection of the extractor hood kept the smell of the fish from wafting.

In this, the golden age of Gordon, Emeril, and Padma, cooking is a spectator sport, and the kitchen is our stage—even if, sadly, the family is more frequently focused on the microwave than the gleaming range beside it. Many of us spend more time perusing tile samples than learning how to roast a chicken—and I'm guilty of believing that a new set of All-Clad cookware might have a magically osmotic effect on my culinary skills. (It didn't.)

This is when we might heed German graphic design visionary Otl Aicher, author of *The Kitchen Is for Cooking*, who wrote: "The kitchen is a function of man's social nature. Cooking is only a pleasure when others join in eating. And cooking is even more of a pleasure if others join in the cooking." And all the design genius in the world is not going to get that fresh fish into the frying pan, or those well-scrubbed potatoes into the oven.

Kitchens of the Future

Daniel Patterson, chef and owner of Coi, food writer

According to this chef who routinely pushes the boundaries of how food is prepared and presented, the ideal kitchen will look back to the future—equipped with sous-vide systems and such cornerstones of molecular gastronomy as the Pacojet as well as root cellars and an open fireplace. "Technology can lead us to lose track of what works best," says Patterson, who feels every kitchen should also include some kind of garden, even just a few herb pots. "Modern innovations are great, but so is cooking over a primal flame—both respect the integrity of the ingredients and bring people together, which is the whole point." And in terms of energy efficiency? "Induction stoves should be the norm."

Johnny Grey, kitchen designer, author of Kitchen Culture

The nephew of food guru Elizabeth David, Grey found validation for his design approach in the field of neuroscience. "A lot about what makes people feel happy in their space is based on how we're hard-wired," says Grey, a champion of the "unfitted kitchen," in which furniture, color, diverse materials, and rounded edges create a sense of ease. "Sharp objects trigger a primitive fear response in the brain. Soft geometry is more comfortable to move through and thus increases usable space. The market is finally catching up." In open kitchens, "the space needs to be managed—people feel better when their backs are covered and they can see what's coming." ▸

❶ The average kitchen deposits a gallon of grease in the home every year.

❷ During a radar-related experiment around 1946, engineer Percy Spencer noticed that a candy bar in his pocket had melted. Follow-up experiments, including an egg that exploded as its temperature rose, spawned a multimillion-dollar industry and that noxious-smelling bane of the workplace—microwave popcorn.

Open Kitchen

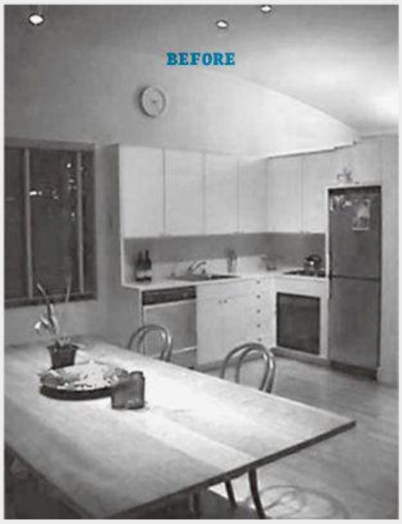
A San Francisco architect turns his "inefficiency" kitchen into a modestly scaled and well-lit place to cook, eat, work, and enjoy the view—even with his back turned.

"It had no redeeming qualities," says Cass Calder Smith of the L-shaped kitchen in his Telegraph Hill home that barely held two people. Having raised the ceiling into the attic space, Smith tucked the new kitchen into a corner, with windows along two walls pulling in postcard views of the Transamerica Pyramid and beyond.

"Because the kitchen is part of the dining room, I didn't want to fill it with bulky stuff," says Smith, who stashed the oven and Sub-Zero fridge into an adjacent pantry and built the cooktop into the narrow island. Painted white medium-density fiberboard (MDF) cabinets blend into the room, their bistro mirrors casting reflections off the back window.

What Smith calls his "suburban window seat" conceals flat files where he stores materials for drawing at the mid-century drafting/dining table found at a flea market. "Between cooking, eating, and working, this is where I spend the most time," says Smith, who rarely ventures into the living room, except to grill meat in the fireplace.

"It's an urban kitchen," he says, referring to the relatively modest size, especially as compared to some of the more expansive versions he's created for clients. "Kitchens should be scaled to the size of the family and the house—which in this case is 18 feet wide. It doesn't have to be a grand statement; it just has to work."



KITCHENS OF THE FUTURE

Cardenio Petrucci, co-owner of San Francisco furniture showroom Dzine
Petrucci has seen the kitchen assume increasing prominence, to the point where it's akin to a piece of fine furniture. "A new Boffi system called the On/Off Monoblock holds everything, then closes with the push of a button into a kind of armoire," says Petrucci, who sees clutter concealment gaining in stature, along with green solutions. "Boffi uses about 98 percent recycled materials, and a new Piero Lissoni design incorporates beautiful wooden planks from salvaged buildings." While Boffi and others offer composting options—from under-the-sink to a countertop hole that connects to an airtight container—"this is still a very tough sell here. Clearly, people have some catching up to do!"

Christine Rosen, senior editor, The New Atlantis: A Journal of Technology and Society
"Looking at the data, we will continue to eat more convenience foods and to gather less as a family, just as our kitchens become ever more 'gourmet' and 'professional.' It's a status symbol—a sign that one is committed to domesticity without any real follow-through. But there's an ironic silver lining to the economic crisis. Prepared foods and eating meals out cost more than cooking from scratch. So we might see a retreat back to the home…gathering with family and friends, which would be good for our social health. One of the best meals I've had came out of the tiniest kitchen. Instead of thinking 'how much can we spend?' we might try 'how much can we do with how little?'" ▸

Photo by Cesar Rubio (after), courtesy Cass Calder Smith (before)

❸ It's not surprising that a woman, Josephine Cochran, perfected the first working dishwasher. Unveiled at the 1893 World's Fair, the contraption did not catch on with the general public until the 1950s; Cochran went on to found a little company that became KitchenAid.

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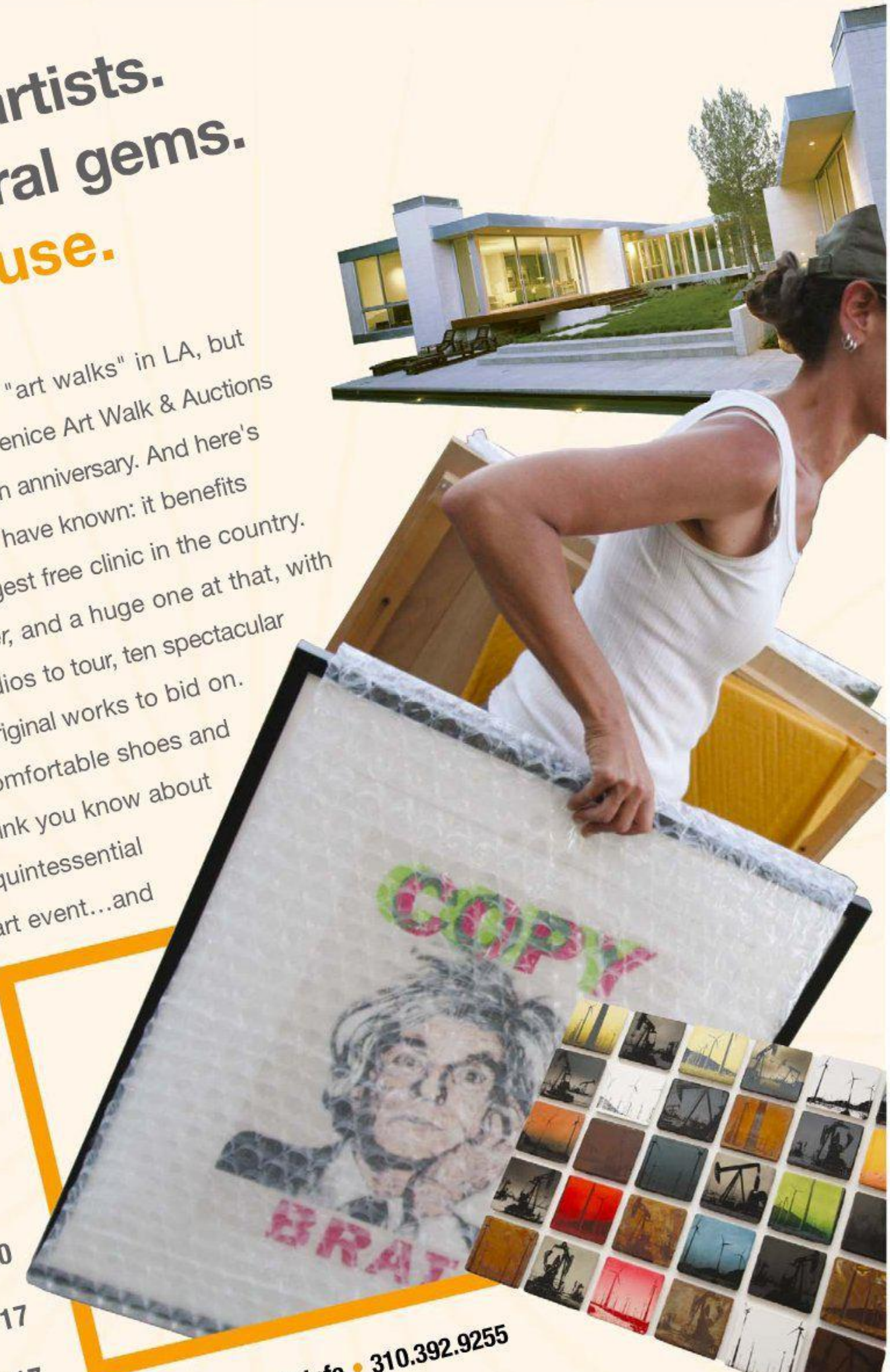

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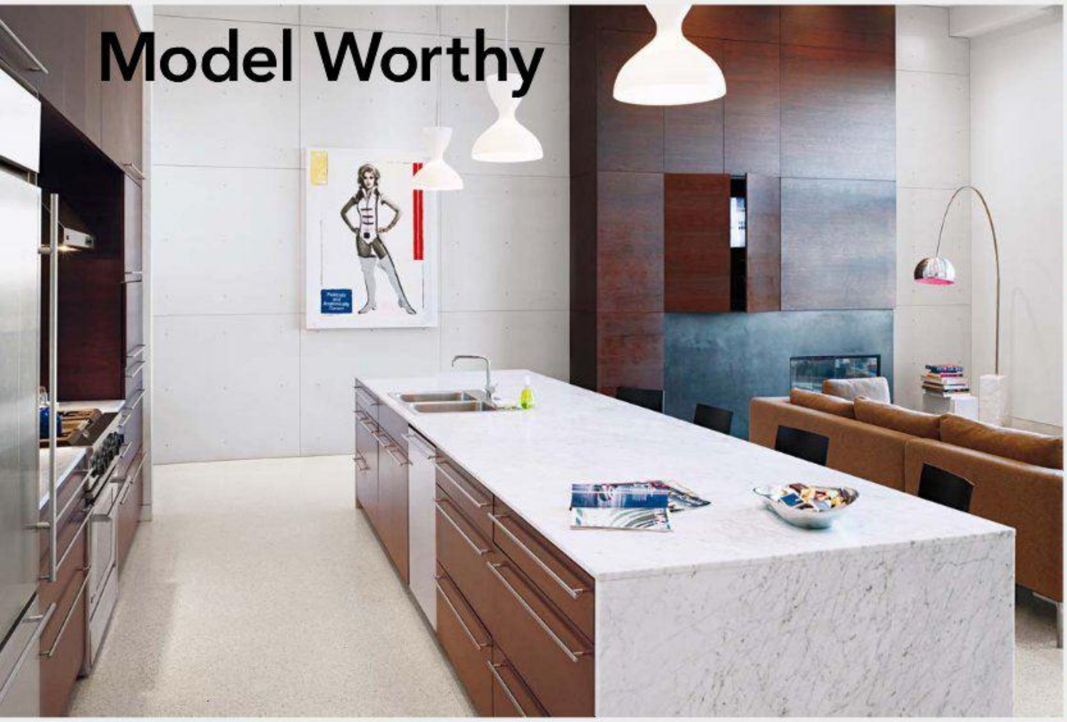
Model Worthy



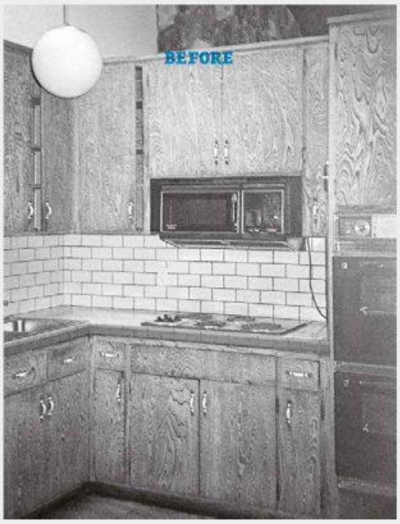
The true test of a kitchen's mettle is not how it looks brand-new, but how it looks after a decade of wear and tear from heaving cleavers and spilling sauce.

Though it may be unfairly maligned as a decade, the 1970s have a few things to answer for, such as kitchens that imprisoned their occupants in a dark hole of greasy cabinetry whilst family and guests cavorted out of sight.

When Nilus De Matran renovated this developer's special overlooking San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district almost ten years ago for a couple who frequently entertain, he liberated the kitchen by knocking down walls and opening up the view across the newly created great room. When the peaked roof was flattened out, three new skylights let the sunshine in.

"I treated the kitchen, the fireplace wall, and the closet with dark walnut, so these big floating objects relate to one another across the space," says De Matran, who recently designed a modern American kitchen system for Design Within Reach. White terrazzo flooring further unifies the room, standing up to the four resident pugs while melting into the Carrara marble-clad island. Cabinets on either side conceal pots and dishware.

Though the island was designed to be wide enough for group cooking and hanging out, it recently doubled as a catwalk during a shoe designer's trunk show. "I'm happy to say there were no casualties," reports De Matran, "neither the marble nor the models."



BEFORE

KITCHENS OF THE FUTURE

Antonio Citterio, architect, Arclinea design coordinator

"As the kitchen assumes its place as the most important part of the home, we are thankfully moving away from the idea of designing the kitchen as if it were a clinic or a sterile environment. To cook is to make a mess. Life is messy! This is the place we gather, where our children do homework, where we cook and break bread together. So, it is full of stuff. As the living room shrinks and turns into more of a private realm, the kitchen is absorbing the dining room and the placement of the table is becoming as important as the design of the kitchen itself."

Scott Hudson, founder and president of Henrybuilt

About eight years ago, Scott Hudson founded his Seattle-based company Henrybuilt (named for his grandfather) to try to fill the void between sophisticated high-end European kitchen systems and what he calls the "hodgepodge" approach: "American kitchens tend to be a collage of unrelated bits—counter, lighting, cabinets, backsplash tiles—that only occasionally work together. I think that kitchens designed as systems—more unified wholes—are absolutely the future. The way it's done now is a waste of economic resources, not very functional, and much more likely to be replaced a few years later. If you think about the prefab movement, the same impulses make a systems approach appealing: the desire to control costs, keep things simple, predict how it will turn out, and still make a personal statement."

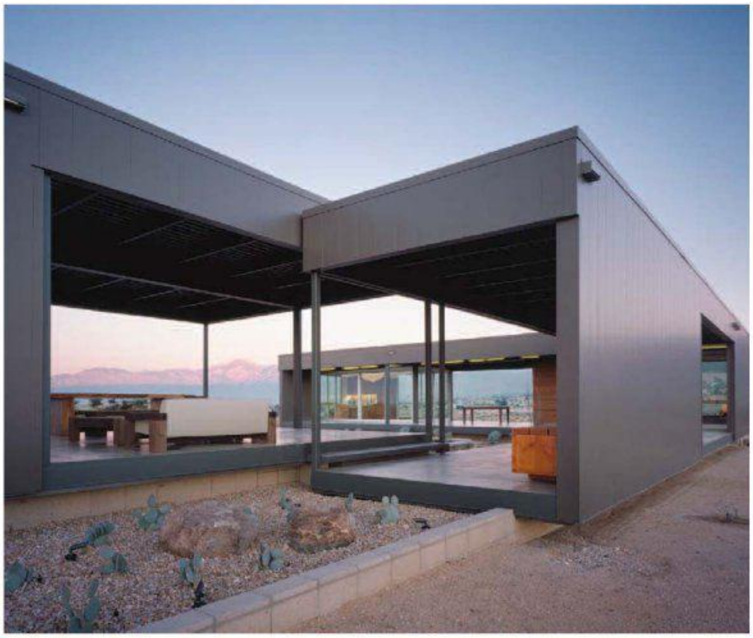
Photo by Cesar Rubio (after), courtesy Nilus Designs (before)

❺ The term "molecular gastronomy" was coined in the 1980s by physicist Nicholas Kurti. In a presentation for the Royal Society of London, he remarked: "I think it is a sad reflection on our civilization that while we can and do measure the temperature in the atmosphere of Venus, we do not know what goes on inside our soufflés."

❻ In 1945, after building the first free-standing freezer in his basement, Westye F. Bakke founded the Sub-Zero Freezer Company in an old two-car garage.

MARMOL RADZINER
AND ASSOCIATES AIA

Desert House, 2005



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Lunch Boxes

With its updated version of the old walk-in hearth, Bulthaup deconstructs the kitchen into a freestanding system fit for a modern ascetic.

Also known as the Kitchen Workshop, Bulthaup's new b2 system consists of a workbench and two wooden boxes. At once beautiful and austere—even monastic—it melds a Shakerlike simplicity with a rigorous approach to storage calibrated down to the last espresso cup. Opened up, the boxes are the kitchen. Closed, they're a sculptural installation, more Donald Judd than Julia Child.

The Appliance Cabinet contains the oven, dishwasher, and European-scale fridge (American behemoths may need to chill outside the box). The Tool Cabinet unfolds like a magician's trunk to reveal deeper and deeper layers for utensils, dishware, and food. The workbench—a kind of freestanding island—may be customized with various cooktop and sink modules and with materials such as stone for baking and wood for chopping. Rolling garbage carts reside respectfully below.

Like many things that appear simple on the surface, the b2 may demand too great a level of discipline for some. If you're the type who leaves no pot unsullied when concocting your signature paella, you may wish to temper utopian dreams of chaos containment with a more forgiving system. (Ditto if you are wont to collect stray bits of crockery.) However, as something to aspire to, the b2—with its reassuring message that there's a place for everything and everything has its place—exists in a league of its own. ▸

Photos courtesy Bulthaup Corporation

❼ The optimal temperature for the refrigerator is 40 degrees Fahrenheit or lower. A temperature greater than that may encourage bacterial growth.

❽ Kitchen and Bath Business's *Market Forecaster* report projected that Americans would spend $80 billion futzing with their kitchens in 2008, a dip from $92 billion the previous year, but still a healthy amount to throw at a room that probably worked well enough already.

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The Cooked Kitchen: A Poetical Analysis
EOOS
Springer, 2008
While developing the b2 kitchen system with Bulthaup, design studio EOOS considered archetypal images and rituals going back hundreds of years. Displayed in black silhouette, 40 kitchen objects—from toque to tool wall—serve as an illuminating departure point for a new philosophy of design.

Guide to Easier Living
Mary and Russel Wright
Gibbs Smith, 2003
Before there was Martha, there were the Wrights, whose vision for a "modernist utopia" blew away the Victorian dust motes and seems as fresh today as it did 60 years ago.

The Kitchen: History, Culture, Design
Rita Mielke
Feierabend Verlag, 2005
A historical overview followed by a detailed visual survey of the modern kitchen in all its iterations as conceived by top-shelf manufacturers and designers, including Alno, Rational, Wellmann, Leicht, SieMatic, Dada, Poggenpohl, and Norman Foster.

Kitchens: A Design Source Book
Vinny Lee
Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1998
Delicious eye candy and practical ideas for new kitchen design or renovation, including equipment, materials, and aesthetic choices.

The Making of the Modern Kitchen: A Cultural History
June Freeman
Berg Publishers, 2004
"Independent sociologist" June Freeman tracked 74 families as they shopped for and purchased new kitchens—analyzing their aesthetic decisions while exploring the dominant role women play in the process.

The Warmest Room in the House: How the Kitchen Became the Heart of the Twentieth-Century American Home
Steven Gdula
Bloomsbury, 2007
Discussing everything from Typhoid Mary to Rachael Ray, the Crock-Pot to Chez Panisse, avocado-colored appliances to the rise of pesto, Gdula uses the kitchen as a springboard for exploring trends and cultural innovations across the decades.

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homeportfolio.com/top/kitchen.html

The Kitchn Home Tours
This offshoot of the website Apartment Therapy takes us into kitchens both slick and funky, from an Eichler in San Francisco to a farmhouse in Lake Forest, Illinois, to a lagoon-blue, unfolding jewel box of efficiency in London—prompting envy and ideas aplenty.
thekitchn.com/thekitchn/home-tours

Surfas
A cult chef's haunt in Los Angeles with a website that offers esoteric cooking implements, Hawaiian volcanic salts, and everything needed to tap into your inner Ferran Adrià—from Raz El Hanout to ground and roasted wattleseed.
surfasonline.com

Big Words

Aga: English-made, cast-iron, enamel-glazed stove that uses stored radiant heat to cook food and lacks dials and temperature settings—requiring the cook to move food to differently heated ovens and hotplates. Since the 1920s, Aga has evolved from a fairly typical middle-class English appliance into a 1,300-pound status symbol stateside.

Backsplash: Wall area behind stove and sink in direct firing line of grease and water splatters. It is usually specified in a smooth, nonporous material that's easy to wipe down, such as glass or ceramic tiles, marble, granite, or stainless steel.

CFM rating: The test of a range hood's quality, CFM describes the amount of air moved per minute in cubic feet. An effective home hood should fall between 250 and 650 CFM; a professional restaurant-style hood may be as high as 1,200.

Convection fan: Circulates heat evenly so each oven rack maintains the same level of heat (as when baking layer cakes, for example). Because convection ovens move hot air past the food, they can cook food more quickly at a lower temperature.

Downdraft ventilation: Less effective at removing smoke than an updraft hood, it is built into the back of the stove or island.

Dual-fuel range: Incorporates what many believe is the best of both worlds for optimal temperature control: gas burners up top, electric oven below.

Induction cooking: A method in which high-frequency magnetic fields generate heat from an electric current induced by a coil beneath a ceramic glass surface. The pot (which must be made of ferromagnetic materials such as iron and stainless steel) is heated, rather than the stovetop. More energy-efficient than gas or electricity.

Quiet dishwashers: These new water- and electricity-saving models are no more aurally intrusive than a refrigerator motor.

Updraft hood: Hangs over the stove to suck steam and odors away from pots and pans. Usually ducted through an outside wall, it is more efficient than downdraft systems—particularly for the high-BTU-, high-heat-generating cooktops preferred by serious home chefs.

Work triangle: This oft-repeated phrase of kitchen designers refers to creating maximum efficiency by laying out the refrigerator, stove, and sink in a triangle whose sides each measure between four and nine feet.

9 Perhaps the first celebrity chef, Bartolomeo Scappi (1500-1577) cooked for emperors and popes. His cookbook includes the first-known picture of a fork.

10 As a response to the cookie-cutter fitted kitchens of the era and the space program, design visionary Luigi Colani showed his Tang-orange biomorphic "kitchen satellite" at the 1970 Cologne furniture fair. His futuristic cross between a cave and a command center never quite made it to mass production.

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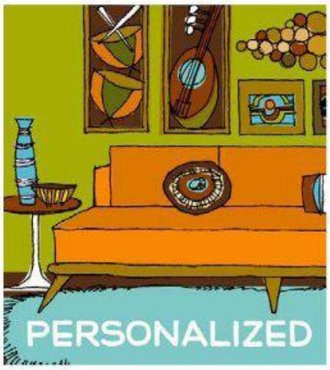

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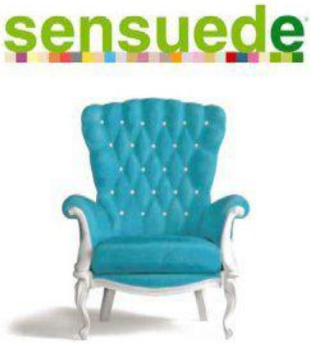

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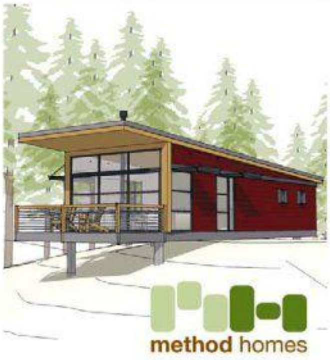

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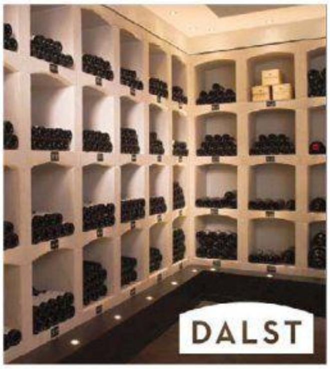

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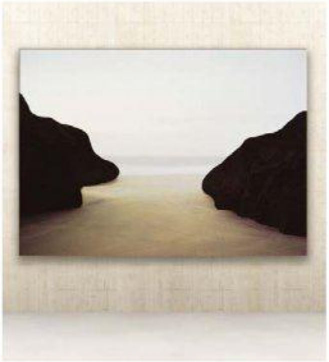

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Shown: Veneto Fili Pendant by Oggetti Luce.

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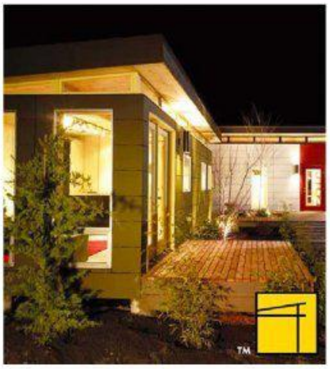

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Small Prefab Structures

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Modern Market

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Shown: Eames House Bird by Vitra.

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View Laura de Santillana's 21-inch tall vases at Dwell on Design in Los Angeles, June 26-28, 2009.

Shown: Bambu Vases, Laura de Santillana.

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Shown: Rikyu Collection Lounge and Tsukaishi Table by Ted Boerner.

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Shown (right): A "Texture" design printed 30" x 30" on canvas and framed with a black wood floater frame.

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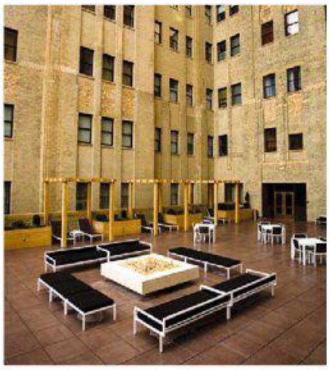

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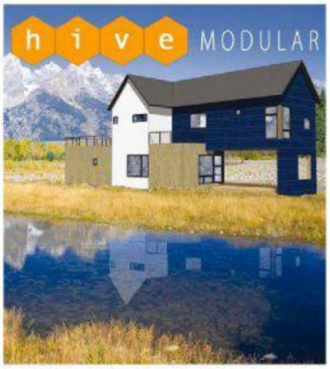

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Brand Director
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esther@dwell.com

Joanne Lazar
Southwest, Southeast, and Mid-Atlantic regions
Tel. 631-320-3185
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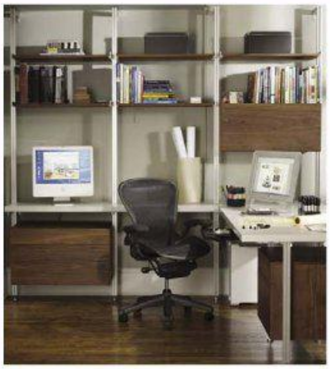

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Shown: Boobyalla series.

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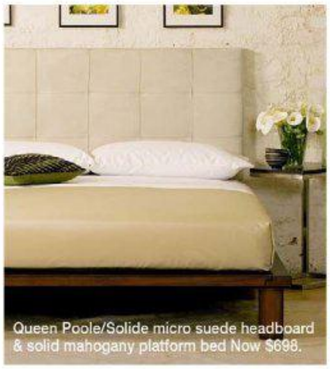

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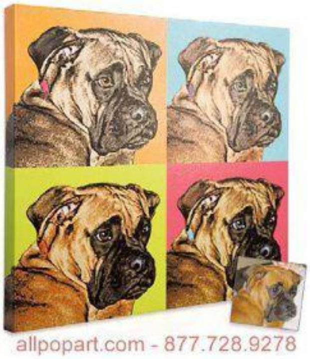

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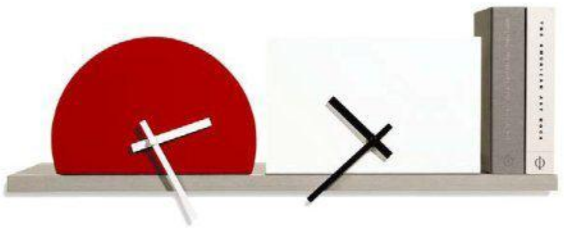

MoMA Design Store

New from the MoMA Design Store are the "Unfinished Clocks" from designers Yve Thelermont and David Hupton. This atypical version of a typical clock is designed to be displayed at the edge of a shelf or mantel. Eye-catching, it appears to be only the top portion of a clock, but its hands fully rotate. Made of powder-coated steel with aluminum hands. One AA battery included. Round/red or rectangle/white, $46.

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Photo: Dennis Anderson

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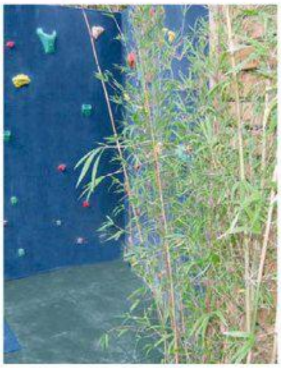

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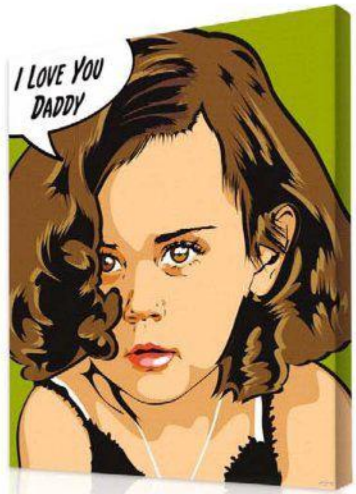
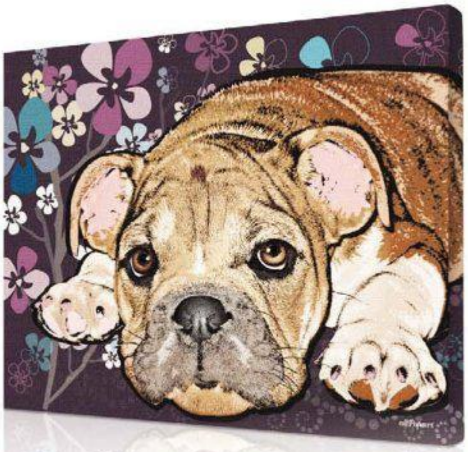
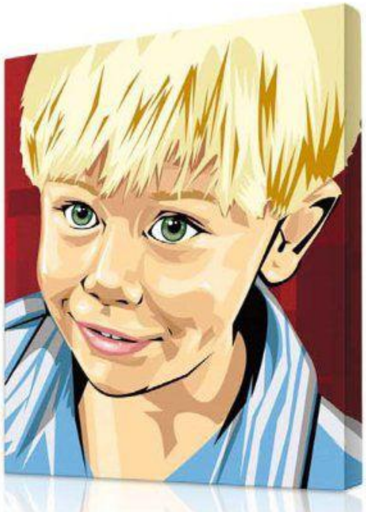


lichStyle®, 16"x20" on gallery wrap canvas



retroPop™ - Autumn Petals, 20"x16" on gallery wrap canvas



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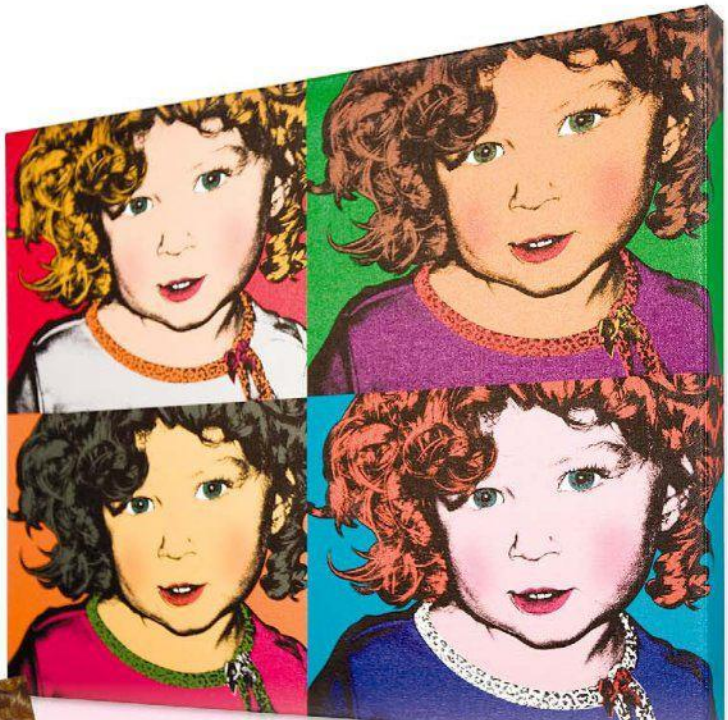

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A Porous Line

If the ground is a garden's skin, per- meability is one measure of its health. When the designers at Surfacedesign encountered this shaded, sloping backyard in San Francisco's Noe Valley, they sought to make it as porous as possible while meeting their clients' request for two spaces—one for their kids and one for entertaining.

The designers added concrete partitions and Cor-Ten planter boxes to existing stone retaining walls, creating a series of switchbacks that guide the journey to both the lawn and the garden of decomposed granite, which breathes better than concrete. Runnels frame the steps to enhance drainage, and a native sedge called Juncus helps purify runoff before it enters the groundwater system. The garden's strong sculptural quality—punctuated by the softening presence of Japanese maples and low-light-loving plants such as anemones, viburnum, and ferns—makes the space as intriguing to enjoy from the homeowners' renovated Victorian above as it does from the ground below.

Story by Deborah Bishop
Photo by Marion Brenner

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